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THE

WIFE.

A NOVEL.

M. and S. Brooke, Printers,
Paternoster-Row, London.

THE

WIFE.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

By MARIA BENSON,
Author of "Thoughts on Education."

"I have, when soliloquising or communing with my own thoughts, been ready to exclaim, Who is the faithful friend of man—is it not woman? Without her affectionate assiduity how would he be preserved through the dangers attendant on the helpless state of infancy? Is she not equally to be regarded as the cheering companion in youth, the friend and consoler through middle life?—Lastly, the endearing partner who soothes the infirmities of age, and tends to ward off the attacks of disease by attentions which mitigate pain, though they cannot wholly banish it. —To sum up all—Is she not the friend that is nearer than a *brother*, who supports that pillow on which the wearied head seeks to find repose when on the very verge of eternity."

"*Thoughts and Remarks on establishing an Institution for the Support and Education of unportioned respectable Females.*"—By Helena Whitford.

Vol. III.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

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CHAPTER LVIII.

The grass grows between the stones of the tomb,
I sit in the mournful shade, the wind sighs
Through the grass, his memory rushes on my
Mind; undisturbed you now sleep; in the
Tomb you rest alone,

OSSIAN.

ONE day as the family were conversing, Jessica expressed her desire to visit the grave of her departed friend previous to her quitting Montpelier, and Madamoiselle, who would not now leave her for a single moment, proposed to attend her.

The following evening they set out for that purpose, and as the place was not a great distance from Monsieur Delaborde's, they did not order the carriage, but, ac-

companied by little "Hanbury" and his nurse, walked to the burying ground.

The days were now becoming considerably shorter, and the evening was closing; not a sound interrupted the still solemnity of the scene, as Jessica entered those grounds, where the remains of her honoured friend, quietly reposed.

She took her infant son to her bosom, and seated herself on a mound of earth near his grave, where she silently, and sadly, contemplated the objects before her.

Adellé saw how deeply she was absorbed, and unwilling to disturb her, she rose from her seat and walked on.

The emotions of Jessica were indeed of a bitter kind, as she sat leaning over her child, her eyes riveted on the spot which contained the ashes of that being so dear to her.

The recollection of the many scenes of sorrow and anxiety, that she had encountered, since Mr. Hanbury's death,

rushed on her imagination, and filled it with gloomy forebodings.

How many hours of anxiety, and disquietude, had already been her portion, how many calamities might yet await her.

The tears poured down her face, as throwing herself on her knees beside his tomb.

" Farewell," she exclaimed, " thou blest shade, a long farewell; oh! if thou deigns't to hover over me in this sad hour, dedicated to the remembrance of thy virtues, shed thy influence around me, fortifying my mind to a patient endurance of the trials that may befal me, and teaching me resignation to the will of a Supreme Being!"

Jessica arose, a deep sigh arrested her attention, she turned to observe who had listened to her aspirations, and was thus sympathizing with her, when she beheld the old gentleman who had so frequently been the topic of conversation amongst her friends.

He was resting against the wall which divided her from that part of the ground where Madamoiselle was waiting for her, and on passing him she moved; she knew not whether it would be pleasant to him to acknowledge his civilities further, and hesitated.

The stranger at length spoke to her, and that circumstance relieved her embarrassment.

"I was anxious," said Jessica, "to have it in my power to thank you for your kindness to me, at a period when I was not in a state of health, to express my gratitude."

"I trust," said he, "then, that you are better, though your looks do not confirm that hope."

"I am much better, I thank you," replied Jessica, and paused.

"This is too late an hour," returned the old gentleman, "for an invalid, and I would not advise you to prolong your walk."

Jessica observed that the air was indeed becoming piercingly cold; she stopt for Madamoiselle, and as she stood involuntarily "turned round to take a last look, a last farewell," of the grave of her friend, the tears burst from her eye, and the stranger regarded her with an expression of the deepest interest.

"I fear," said he, "that your visit to this place was not prompted by curiosity alone; I am sorry that at your early age you should have outlived any one so dear to you; but be comforted in the reflection that there are other, and heavier lamities."

Jessica moved her head, in assent to his last observation. "He had touched upon the string on which hung all her sorrows." She thought of Valdesa far distant, the husband of her affections, by whom she was deserted; this was indeed a heavier calamity, and her heart too full for words, she only glanced her eye towards the stranger in silent agony.

Madamoiselle Delaborde now joined Jessica, and taking leave of the stranger, they returned home. Jessica was deeply affected, by her sad visit of that evening, and Madamoiselle at the thoughts of her approaching separation from her friend; little conversation passed, and Jessica, on her return to Monsieur Delaborde's, retired to her own room.

CHAPTER LIX.

O'er wide foamy waters I'm destin'd to travel,
A poor simple exile forlorn and unknown;
Yet while the dark fates shall my fortune unravel,
My grateful affection shall still be your own.
MARY ROBINSON.

THE following day was the last, which Jessica was to spend with her friends for a very long time, perhaps that one which was to terminate finally their personal intercourse, on this side the grave.

Every individual of the family seemed to share the general regret on this separation.

Monsieur Delaborde, as was customary

with him, when any circumstance particularly affected his mind, sat silent, and Delaborde when he spoke on indifferent subjects, was evidently thinking of one, which more deeply interested him.

Madamoiselle frequently tried to converse, but tears prevented her utterance, and she at length gave up the attempt.

Jessica was much gratified by these flattering marks of their regard, and perhaps the last hours she was to spend amongst them, were those in which she most fully estimated their value.

In the evening Jessica requested that Monsieur Delaborde would have the kindness to cause a plain inscription to be placed on Mr. Hanbury's tomb. "I was shocked," said she, "on going there to find that it had not been already done, and blamed myself much for the omission.

"Mr. Hanbury never neglected me,

or my concerns, but was ever anxiously solicitous respecting both, and any appearance of ingratitude to his memory is indeed a severe reflection on me.

"I have only the difficulties of my situation since his death to plead in extenuation of this seeming failure."

Monsieur Delaborde assured Jessica, that all should be done, which she had requested, and desiring to speak with her in another room, he there took her hand. "Forgive me," he said, "my dear young friend, for the liberty I take, in requesting that you will have no hesitation in allowing me to become your banker, should you require one on the present occasion.

"I have long considered you, so far as affection and good wishes extend, in the light of a daughter. Your separation from the Signor has been not of short duration, and that circumstance may have prevented you being so well

prepared for a long voyage, as you otherwise would."

Jessica thanked Monsieur Delaborde with all the warmth that gratitude inspired. "But," said she, "I hope I am sufficiently provided for, in pecuniary points, till I reach England." He would not however listen to her refusal, and slipping a note into her hand, he affectionately pressed it between his.

"I am sorry indeed," he continued, "more sorry than I can well express at the idea of your leaving us."

"Jessica assured him that she should ever retain the most lively sense of the unmerited kindness that she had experienced, from every branch of his family.

"My obligations to you all," added she, "are of a nature never to be forgotten. No, never can I repay you for your fatherly attentions to an unfortunate woman, a widow and an or-

phan in the most *pitiable* sense of the word."

Monsieur was much affected on beholding Jessica's emotion.

"Believe me, my dear Signora," said he, "that in any little attentions we may have been so happy as to render you, we have been most amply rewarded by the enjoyment of your society. I trust you will meet with the Signor on your arrival in England, which should you not immediately be so fortunate as to do, you will I hope return to those friends who part from you with extreme reluctance, and are only reconciled by the hope of again, though at some distant period, enjoying your society; happy and enviable do we all esteem the Signor in the possession of such a wife."

They now returned to the drawing-room, and Jessica ringing the bell, requested that Philip would come up stairs to receive some directions which

she wished to give him. When he appeared, " Philip," she said, " are those trunks corded, respecting which I spoke to you in the morning?" Philip hesitated, " No madam," he replied, " I have not done them yet," his voice faultered ; " I did not like," he added, " to set about them till the last," and whilst the tear burst from his eye, " I thought it was beginning the day in trouble," and wholly unrestrained by the presence of the family, he now, whilst sobbing aloud, exclaimed, " Oh Lord! that ever I should have lived to meet with such people in foreign parts, you have been father, husband, and brother, to my dear mistress all in one, and poor Philip has lived like a king amongst you, and there's dear young Miss, may heaven bless her wherever she goes, but she's too good for this world. Oh that my dear old master had lived to see this day, that he might have thanked you, and prayed for you

as your goodness deserves." Madamoiselle was unable to bear this scene, and rushing past Philip she ran out of the room.

After some minutes Jessica followed her, and found her kneeling beside the bed where little Hanbury was laid, folding him in her arms and weeping over him. "You must be well convinced, my dear Madamoiselle," said Jessica, affectionately pressing her hand, "that my feelings on this parting with yourself and family must be very poignant; but when I reflect on its necessity, I exert myself to bear it with calmness.

"Let me entreat you to call up your fortitude on this evening, that it may be spent in composure at least, if not in chearfulness."

Madamoiselle however never philosophized where her feelings were concerned. "You cannot," said she, "by reasoning with me, make me feel one particle less

than I do at present. I know I am going to part from those I love, and all the arguments in the world will not dry my tears.

" But go to my father and I will follow you."

Jessica now returned to the drawing-room, where she found Delaborde alone. " I am much pained," said she to him, " on witnessing your sister's agitation, and regret that I spoke of my departure so long before it was to take place."

" Adellé indeed," said Delaborde, " feels deeply, though, considering from whom she is going to part, that is not a circumstance to create surprise, but no person who sees and hears her in her gayer moments would give her credit for one half the sensibility which she possesses. Her parting from you too may possibly remind her of former separations, in which she was deeply interested. Poor Adellé, thou hast suf-

fered much in the midst of thy vivacity."

Madamoiselle now entered the room along with her father, and the conversation took a more general turn; still however there was the same restless anxiety in the countenance and manner of each of the party, as if looking forward to an event they dreaded, yet wished the termination of.

In the course of the evening it was agreed that the family should accompany Jessica to the port from whence the vessel was to embark for England.

CHAPTER LX.

Day by day pass'd on,
And still I lov'd thee with encreasing love;
Never to living ear came sweeter sounds,
Than when I heard thee by our own fire side,
First uttering without words a natural tune,
When thou a feeding babe didst in thy joy
Sing at thy mother's breast.

WORDSWORTH'S LYRICAL BALLADS.

On rising to retire, Jessica felt her spirits unusually depressed, and pressing the hand of Monsieur Delaborde and Louis in silence, she went up to her own room, where Madamoiselle accompanied her, and placing herself beside the dressing table, gave vent to her lamentations.

"Would that I had never known you," said she, "I should then have been spared my present feelings.

"To-morrow when I return to this house, with what bitter sensations shall I view every object; my beloved friend no longer its inmate, but gone from us never to return.

"My sweet little Hanbury too, I shall hear his voice no more." But, placing a box on the table, "when you arrive on your own shore you will here," she continued, "find some little remembrances for him; talk to him of me when he can understand you, and tell him how much I loved his amiable mother;" and throwing her arms round Jessica's neck, she hid her face in her bosom.

Jessica again besought her friend to be calm, though her own tears flowed, and when, yielding to her entreaties, Madamoiselle had composed herself in some degree, and retired to her own room, she kneeled down with resigned calm-

ness, and after offering up her prayers for the welfare of those kind beings, by whom she had been thus tenderly cherished, Jessica threw herself on the bed and tried to compose herself. Her slumbers were however often broken by confused dreams and frightful images, and when in the morning the servant came into her apartment to call her, she felt very little recruited by her night's sleep.

None of the family had yet appeared when Jessica descended to the breakfast room. But Delaborde a few minutes after came in; she observed that he was silently remarking her languid looks.

"These separations," said she, "from whom those we regard are great enemies to repose, for this is the first night in which I have not slept tranquilly under your hospitable roof."

"I believe," replied Delaborde, "that many of its inhabitants might make a similar confession. The Signora will

leave none here to whom her virtues have not endeared her," and walking to the window, "We have now reason," said he, "to recall my father's observation to mind, when he had first the pleasure of seeing you.—"We only touch at happiness before we are deprived of it;" it is indeed but too true."

Monsieur Delaborde now made his appearance, and immediately afterwards Madamoiselle.

The party each felt too deeply to converse on any subject, but that which occupied their thoughts, and that was too interesting to speak upon at all.

Breakfast was past in silence, only interrupted by the sound of the vehicle which was to convey far from them the friend they so much valued.

Madamoiselle started at the sound, and rising from her seat quitted the room.

The carriages were in a few mo-

ments ready, and they prepared to set out. Poor Philip, as he passed through the hall where the servants were assembled to pay their duty to his mistress, shook with agitation, and wringing the hand of each of them, the big tear rolled down his cheek, and without uttering one word, he prepared to attend his mistress to the carriage.

Madamoiselle took possession of Hanbury, and requested to have him on her lap, for the remainder of their short journey; she drew her veil over her eyes, and leaned back in the carriage in silent agony.

The ride was passed in mutual silence, till they arrived at Cette, the port from whence Jessica was to embark.

Delaborde went out to make enquiries, on his alighting from the carriage, at what time the vessel was to sail, and was informed that they were now ready to embark, and were only

waiting for the lady's luggage being carried aboard; he returned to the room with this intelligence.

Madamoiselle had given the infant to the care of his nurse, and was standing, her head rested against the window. "A few moments, then," said she, "and all will be over; the friend I love and value will be torn from me, but has not this been my sad fate through life." Monsieur walked to and fro in the room; Delaborde left it for a short time, then returned to it.

Monsieur at length broke the painful silence. "I must now," he said, "for the last time I may ever have it in my power, for I am an old man, and the pleasure of sharing your society, may in future be denied to me, express my grateful sense of the happiness you have conferred on me and mine.

"I hope and trust that your hus-

band will love and cherish you in that degree which you so justly merit; tell him when you meet him, that you have left a house where there was not one heart that did not ache on being severed from you. He may travel far and meet with many beings, of whom he will not hear the same sentiment *sincerely* pronounced."

Jessica had borne with calmness every preceding scene, but when Monsieur uttering these words rose to embrace her, her fortitude utterly forsook her; and bursting into a transport of grief, "May it please the Almighty," said she, "to bless you, and all dear to you, and re-unite us in a better world."

Philip now entered the room. "All is ready," said he, madam. Madamoiselle clasped the Signora to her bosom, and seemed unwilling to be torn from her. "Farewell then," said Jessica, "to you all, friends so dearly loved and highly valued, a long farewell." She stopped, and leaned on Madamoiselle,

wholly overcome by her emotion; and Monsieur Delaborde taking her hand in silence, followed by his son and daughter, accompanied her to the vessel, where the latter, again throwing her arms round Jessica, entreated that she would cherish her remembrance, and after the party had each shook hands with old Philip and embraced the little boy, they slowly returned to shore.

CHAPTER LXI.

Receding slowly as thou seem'st to move,
My full heart blesses thee, benignant shore,
Endear'd to those by gratitude and love,
I part with now, perchance to meet no more.

Quit then a moment, quit the spreading sail,
And waft these thoughts to those I love, sweet gale.

BENSON'S POEMS.

JESSICA seated herself on deck to take a last look of those friends from whom she had parted, in all probability, for ever; her eyes were riveted on the shore till the traces of their stepts were no longer discernible; sick at heart, she then retired into the cabin, where her forlorn situation painfully presented itself; for never, perhaps, had she so sensibly felt it, as at that moment when torn from

those whose tender care and pleasing converse, had beguiled her weary hours.

No situation could exhibit a more desolate prospect, and had not Jessica's mind been armed with that fortitude, which was it's support, she must have sunk under her trials. She was returning to her native country, uncertain whether it contained one being, who might be interested in the event, and in total ignorance of her husband's situation or abode.

As Jessica contemplated her child in this sad hour, whilst he laid extended on her lap, her feelings were indeed poignant. "Perhaps," said she, "thou hast no father to bid thee welcome, thy mother no husband to cherish or protect her; yet let me be grateful for the good I have already enjoyed, and resign myself to the future with hope and confidence.

Philip now came into the cabin, to enquire after the health of his mistress. "Many's the year, Madam," said he,

"that has passed over my head, since I've shed so many tears as this morning, except indeed when my poor old master died, and then we were all sorrowful enough. I always had a spite against the French till we went to Monsieur's; why, madam, there is goodness enough in that family to serve for all the nation."

"They are indeed very amiable," said Jessica, "and we should be ungrateful if we ever lost sight of their kindnesses."

"Why there is that young miss, madam," said Philip, "she came to me in the morning, and calling me out of the room where I was at breakfast, "Philip," she said, "I want to speak with you," and when I went out, she said "You have been very kind and faithful to my friend, meaning you, madam, and I love you for it; I hope you will continue to do your duty to her."

"I hope I shall, and please your

honour, said I, madam, for her own sake, and her father's sake, and my poor master's, who is dead and gone.

" Well, with that she said, " Farewell, Philip," and shaking hands, she put something into my hand, and running away, madam,

" I had not time to see what it was, but when I looked, I found it was a little green silk purse, and there was ten guineas in it; I should have returned it, madam, but only I recollected Madamoiselle is very reih, and I did not wish to affront her goodness."

" I am happy you did not," said Jessica, "for Madamoiselle Delaborde makes no offers that she does not wish should be accepted, and she would have felt hurt at your refusal of her present."

Jessica felt faint from the closeness of the cabin, and now went on deck for the sake of breathing more freely; as she seated herself, she observed, for the first time, a gentleman leaning over the side

of the vessel; he was dressed in deep mourning, and Jessica thought from, his appearance, that he was a native of France; his form was extremely graceful, something of gravity sat on his countenance, occasionally relapsing into melancholy; he moved politely to Jessica, and she returned his salutation; he then entered into conversation with the captain, and Jessica found, from his manner and choice of language, that he was much above the common order, for in both of these there was something that discovered refinement and observation.

He was asking questions relative to some of the customs of England, from which, though he spoke English so well Jessica would not otherwise have suspected it, she learned that he had never yet been in that country. She now retired to her cabin, having begun to experience a slight degree of sickness.

The following morning, Jessica again went on deck with her nurse and Han-

bury, and found her fellow-passenger already there; he took a great deal of notice of the child, which Philip, who was on deck, seemed much gratified with. "You may go a long way," said he, "Sir, and not meet with young master's equal; he was not born on English, ground that's true, but he's sprung from a worthy family on one side at least, and that's every thing, it's better than riches, Sir, it's better than grandeur; in short, there's no happiness, unless a man can lie his hand on heart, and say, all's there as it should be."

The stranger smiled at Philip's garrulity, and seemed desirous of prolonging the conversation, by interrogating him as to his opinion of the country in which he had been.

"I'll tell you, Sir," said Philip, "what my humble opinion is; that it's little matter where we live, whether the country be hot or cold, wet or dry, for there's good and bad in every country alike.

"I can't say, if I must be so bold as to speak my mind, hoping no offence, by reason of seeing you be a Frenchman, that I had any great liking for the French; but I've changed my mind, it was my ignorance, Sir, for which I hope I'm excusable; I thought them all very bad people, and was loth to go amongst them. Why now, Sir, I'm as sorry to leave; for we've come from a house just now, where, from the master to the servants, I defy all the world to bring me their fellows.

"There's the old gentleman; to begin with him, if ever there was a good man on earth he's one, sound at the bottom, no French palaver, but good old English honesty; then there's master Louis his son, he's for all the world the *moral* of his father, and he's followed his footsteps, till, when he's as old, nobody will liken one from the other.

"Then there's young miss, the flower of the flock, never was there such a

merry little grig, and so tender hearted withal, she's had a wet eye too many a time since she parted with us yesterday, for she was powerfully fond of my mistress, I, and of poor Philip too, though I say it, God bless her little heart, I wish she was going with us to England just now, you would be as fond of her in half an hour as I am, though you, perhaps, might not so see much of her goodness."

"Pray what is the name of this family," said the stranger, "who have gained so much on your good graces?"

"Their name, Sir," said Philip, "I may be proud to tell to any body, it is Delaborde, and an honest one it is." "Delaborde," the stranger involuntarily exclaimed. "Aye; very like," replied Philip, "if you ever lived at Montpellier, you may know them, for there's few there that have not heard of their goodness."

"I once," said the gentleman, "was acquainted with a family of that name."

Jessica observed, as he said this, that he looked unusually grave, and soon after he retired to his cabin; as he was passing Jessica for that purpose, he repeated his salutation, and made some remark on the weather.

She now regarded him more attentively; there was something insinuating in his manners, and his face was equally expressive of sensibility and intelligence; and an idea darted across Jessica's mind, that he might be the gentleman who had formerly paid his addresses to Madamoiselle Delaborde; but as this conjecture prevented her thinking very favourably of him, she dismissed it.

CHAPTER LXII.

Unheard, unpitied, unreliev'd,
I bear alone my lade o'care;
For silent low in beds of dust
Lies a that would my sorrow share.

BURNS.

JESSICA mentioned to Philip her intention of going to London immediately on her arrival in England, in order that she might see Mr. Gurney, and endeavour to gain some information respecting Valdesa. "And what," said she to herself, as meditating on the possibility of such a circumstance, "what will become of me should I be unsuccessful in my search; there is no individual in

England to whom I could apply either for advice or protection."

Of Mr. Gurney, Jessica knew very little, only that her affairs had been consigned into his hands; and of her aunt Stanhope, the guardian, if so she could properly be termed, of her infant years, she had never heard any thing since the period of her arrival at Montpelier, though she had addressed her by letter on the eve of her departure from England, and once during her residence abroad.

Her hopes of protection then from that source were not, could not be very sanguine; and her friend Matilda, she had learned, by a late letter from her, had been, and still was with her husband on a visit in Ireland.

As Jessica took this comfortless review of her situation, her thoughts glanced towards the friends whom she had recently quitted, and dwelt on that dearest friend whom the hand of death had

severed from her; yet supported by the consciousness that she was pursuing the path of duty, she suffered not her mind to droop.

She recalled to her imagination the venerable figure of her departed monitor, whilst imparting to her the lessons of truth. "O, may I never," said she, "lose sight of those; in the most trying situations, under circumstances the most adverse, may the reflections that occurred on beholding his lifeless form, be still present to my heart. Alas! when he descanted to me on the value of integrity, rectitude of conduct, and the necessity of fortitude, amidst the varying trials of life, he knew not how the one would be abandoned, or the other exercised. O, Valdesa! fatal was the hour in which you yielded to the indulgence of a miserably destructive passion."

The voyage was tedious; the days were now rapidly shortening, and every

object around had already assumed the cheerless aspect of winter.

As Jessica, with her infant on her knee, tried, by amusing him, to beguile her lonely hours, and pluck from memory the painful sting, "Sad was her song."

On her arrival at Southampton she felt herself so much indisposed that she determined to proceed to town immediately, fearing that she might, by giving the least indulgence to her complaint, be compelled to remain for some time where she was, the idea of which, anxious as she felt to gain some intelligence of her husband, was insupportable; the hope of such intelligence being a most powerful incentive to her proceeding with all possible expedition towards London.

When she reached that city, however, she was so extremely ill, that yielding to the entreaties of Philip, who was

very unhappy respecting her, Jessica sent for a physician, who prescribed strengthening draughts, and ordered her to take the air; she seldom however quitted her child, and had determined that her first visit, on leaving her lodgings, should be to Mr. Gurney.

She ordered a coach a few mornings after her arrival for that purpose, and on driving to his house learned, to her infinite disappointment, that he was not in town.

She next considered whether she should proceed to the abode of Lady Stanhope, who was generally in London at this season of the year. Her never having in any manner noticed her niece, since she quitted her roof, was certainly a proof to Jessica, that she was not anxious to be further burthened with poor relations, yet willing to view this neglect in the least unfavourable light, Jessica supposed it might have proceeded from indolence. "Let me, at least," said she, "have nothing on the score of disre-

spect to charge myself with; Lady Stanhope was my mother's sister, she is wholly ignorant of my residence here; and though I promise myself no very flattering reception, I will do my duty, it is what Mr. Hanbury would have wished;" and requesting Philip to order the coachman to drive to Bedford-square, she stopped at the house formerly occupied by Lady Stanhope; and on enquiring of the servant found that she was yet its owner.

Servants generally assume the cast of their masters, and mistresses, whatever that is, and with their worn-out dresses, put on their manners.

The man, after eyeing the hackney coach with a supercilious air, and looking rather contemptuously, on the plain garb of honest old Philip, stood for some moments as if considering whether his lady should be at home to these plebians, and after making up his mind on the subject, said he believed that Lady

Stanhope was dressing to go out, and had given orders not to be disturbed by any body. "But, I suppose," said Philip, "when she gave these orders she did not know that her own niece intended calling, and you may go and tell her.—I hope it won't prove a great disturbance to her ladyship to meet a relation she has not seen these two years."

"I can deliver the message, certainly," said the man, "though I do not think it will be of any use, for my lady has given her positive orders."

Jessica, now much irritated by the man's impertinence, called to Philip, requesting that he would enter into no further altercation, but merely leave word that she would call on some future day, when it might be more convenient.

"No, madam," said he, "I am an old man, and that fine gentleman is a young one; if he does not know his duty it's fit I should teach it him; and,'

speaking to the man, "I insist on your going to your mistress this moment, and telling her, that Madam Valdesa, her niece, has called upon her, if you think you shall not forget the name by the road, as I see from your manners, you have not travelled much to foreign parts, and may not so well understand their names."

The man muttered something to himself, and prepared to inform his lady that her niece was below; in a few minutes after he came down, saying, that the lady might walk in, and ushered Jessica, along with her maid and son, into a little parlour, where, after waiting a considerable time, Lady Stanhope made her appearance.

As she entered the room Jessica was preparing to salute her; she drew back, however, and, after a formal *courtesy*, desired the daughter of her deceased and *only* sister, to take a seat.

Time did not seem to have given her

additional sweetness of temper or new ideas; for she appeared just as weak and unamiable as two years ago.

"My servant," said she, drawing up to bring herself more on a level with her niece, for her person was as insignificant as her mind, "did inform me your present name, though I do not at this moment recollect it."

"My name is Valdesa," said Jessica.

"Valdesa," repeated she, "hum; it is a foreign name, I think." Jessica bowed in assent.

"So you married a foreigner, for," glancing her eye towards the child, and speaking half doubtingly, "you are married of *course*."

The particular emphasis on the last word, much as Jessica now despised the woman, drew tears from her eyes; but attempting to repress her emotion, and assuming a look of composure, "My husband," said she, "is the son of

the Conte Valdesa; I was united to him during my residence at Montpelier."

"Really," said her ladyship; "and where pray is he now?"

"In England, I hope," Jessica replied.

"Oh, then you came here to seek him.—Well, that is very strange; but one really never knows what to make of *foreigners*, for they are all people of *consequence* when they get into England. And where pray," continued she, "is that old man you went abroad with, has he left you too?"

"He has left me, indeed," said Jessica, bursting into tears, "left me for ever; though the grave has severed him from me, the remembrance of his patient virtues supports me under every indignity. In being torn from him I have, indeed, lost one who would have protected me, alike from the cold blasts of adversity, and the cruel shafts of insult

and scorn; yet his precepts still live in my mind, those taught me the graces of compassion; and the happiness that being enjoys who possesses the will united to the power of cherishing the unfortunate."

"I," said her ladyship, "I can well remember he was a *romantic* old man, and had notions very much out of the *common* way."

"I fear," said Jessica, "your last observation is but too true; indeed, *daily* experience sorrowfully convinces me, that Mr. Hanbury's sentiments were widely different from those of the generality of his fellow-creatures, since *candour* and *humanity* were the leading traits of his character. And," rising from her seat, "I am sorry," said she, "to have trespassed thus long on your ladyship's time," and was quitting the room, when Lady Stanhope said, "I should be glad to know where I may find you *some* morning, perhaps, when no other

or more *particular* engagement intervenes, I may endeavour to *seek* you out."

Jessica then gave her the number of her lodgings; but requested that she would by no means hurry or inconvenience herself on her account. She did not, however, on her neice's leaving the room, take the least notice of the little Hanbury, or give her any invitation to renew her visit, though she might *safely* have done it; for when Jessica left her house it was with a firm determination of *never* entering it more.

CHAPTER XLIII.

When worldly friends had flown in sorrow's hour,
Companion of my griefs, I felt thy power.

BENSON.

JESSICA leaned her head back in the carriage as she drove home, and there relieved her aching heart, from the bitter sensations that had oppressed it, during this visit, where, instead of kindness, affection, and offers of protection, she had met with cruelty, insult, and scorn.

She thought of that family from whom she had lately parted; what a contrast they presented to this woman, in whom Jessica beheld a striking instance of the

errors arising from an improper education, for most of the bad traits that appeared in lady Stanhope, arose from littleness of mind; her ideas contracted, she embraced every narrow prejudice, and illiberal sentiment, and unaccustomed to reflect, she continually exposed herself to silent contempt, or open derision.

On her return to her lodgings, Jessica sat down to write to her friend Madamoiselle Delaborde, but recollected as she was preparing to address her, that she had not yet opened the box, which Adellé had requested her to do, when she arrived on her own shore, and now examined it's contents.

She found they were chiefly presents for her young friend Hanbury. A superb gold coral, a French repeating watch, and several other things of a similar kind; Jessica was closing the box, when something which glittered at bottom of it, attracted her attention, and she discovered, very handsomely

set, the miniature picture of her friend. This was indeed an acquisition more prized by Jessica than all her remembrances, and the manner in which she had presented it, was so like Madamoiselle, that a smile mingled with the tears that dropt on it, as she stood contemplating those features, which were so deeply impressed on her memory.

In the fulness of her heart, Jessica now resumed her pen, and freely poured forth it's feelings. She assured her friends, and assured them truly, that she had met with none so kind, none so amiable, on her own shore; but she could not add the consoling information, that she had yet discovered the abode of her husband.

"How much will they feel for me," said she, "on the arrival of this letter; how forlorn will their imaginations present me to them, and how their friendly hearts will ache. Never can mine, whilst it ceases to beat, become insensible of their

virtues. In these reflections, and in finishing her packet, did her afternoon pass away, when old Philip came up stairs. "Philip," said she, "I have a treat for you, something to shew you, which comes from your favorite Madamoiselle." "There is nothing," said he, "that I should so much like to see, except indeed it was her sweet self." Jessica now shewed him the picture; and clasping his hands; "There she is indeed," said he, "God bless her pretty face, for there's not one like it on this side of the water, for all it's goodness."

This compliment of Philip's, the spontaneous effusion of an honest heart, Jessica did not omit.

That day and several subsequent ones passed away, and Jessica yet heard nothing of Valdesa. She resolved to repeat her visit to Mr. Gurney, and set out for that purpose. She found, on enquiring of the servant, that his master had returned to town, and was

at home. He ushered her into the library, where in a few minutes Mr. Gurney made his appearance.

Jessica then announced herself to him, and after requesting her to be seated, "I was much mortified," he said, "on my return home, to find that the Signor Valdesa had called in my absence. Your letters addressed to him, and enclosed to me, were forwarded to me in the North, and unable to discover his abode, I have never had it in my power to deliver them." Heart sick at this unlooked for, unwelcome intelligence, Jessica sat in silent consternation. "I am very sorry," continued Mr. Gurney, "at this untoward circumstance, but I suppose the Signor is already apprized of the cause." "You know then," eagerly interrogated Jessica, "where my husband at present is." "Indeed," he replied, "I am not so fortunate, but I imagined that you had seen him long ere now."

"Those letters," said she, "were my only hope; I supposed on delivering those, you would obtain a clue to his abode; the unfortunate circumstance that I ventured to confide to you, and which was the cause of Valdesa leaving me, prevented my addressing him openly, and now every hope of tracing him is lost: what must he think of my silence, to what cause attribute so cruel an apparent neglect;" and wholly unrestrained by the presence of a stranger, "Valdesa," said she, "in what a dreadful light must your wife appear, who parted from you, sick, wounded, and banished to a distant country, could remain thus long silent and regardless of you."

Mr. Gurney entreated that Jessica would compose herself.

"It is now three months I understand," added he, "since the Signor called here; but should I again be so fortunate as to meet with him, be assured that nothing shall prevent my im-

mediately informing you." "Your not having seen my husband then," said Jessica, "has of course prevented his applying to you on pecuniary subjects."

"Those," said Mr. Gurney, "Madam, were settled by your brother, Mr. Greville, some time since." "Settled!" exclaimed Jessica, "how, in what manner?" "He presented me an order from you," continued Mr. Gurney, "for two thousand pounds vested in my hands, a considerable time ago."

Jessica was now lost in consternation, "From me," reiterated she, "impossible, since it is more than two years since we last met."

Mr. Gurney now, however, produced the order, which was so close an imitation of Jessica's hand-writing, that she was at first startled by the resemblance.

Her feelings at this moment were of a complicated and agonizing kind; ac-

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knowledge the writing as her own, would be to cancel for ever her claim to the money, and to sacrifice truth on Valdesa's account alone, she shrunk from such a proceeding.

To deny any knowledge of the affair must stamp her brother with the dreadful odium, that attaches to the character of a swindler, and added to that, the crime of forgery. Shocking as that was, she was, however, compelled to declare her ignorance of the transaction, and deny the writing. Mr. Gurney now appeared as much embarrassed as herself, and, whilst blushing from grief, disappointment, and shame, on this discovery, she leaned on the table, he expressed his regret, that he had been prevailed on to part with the money.

"I was much surprised," said he, "when the order was presented to me, at the application, but did not, for a moment, doubt it's validity."

Jessica now expressed the wonder

which she had felt for some time past, on the interest of the sum not being remitted her, the cause of which, in this sad interview, had been too fully developed.

CHAPTER LXV.

Whilst I a hope-abandon'd wight,—
  Unfitted with an aim,
Meet ev'ry sad returning night,
  And joyless morn the same:
    You jostling, yet bustling,
      Forget each grief and pain;
    I listless, yet restless,
      Find ev'ry prospect vain.

BURNS.

In bitterness of heart Jessica now arose to take her leave, and hurrying through the streets until she reached her lodging, she there gave vent to her overcharged afflicted mind. Her husband might at that moment be experiencing all the horrors of want, or worn out with accumulated suffering, the bitter-

ness of poverty, and the seemiag neglect of her, once so dear to him, might have resigned his wretched being.

The money which Jessica had fondly hoped would prove a fortunate resource for Valdesa under his banishment from her, had been sacrificed to a worthless, unfeeling, unprincipled brother, nor had Valdesa, it was evident, applied for pecuniary aid from Mr. Gurney. "No," said she, "he despises me too much, and apparently with too much reason, to owe any thing to me. Oh! my husband, why did I suffer you to depart alone? why did I not insist on accompanying you, and sharing all your difficulties?"

In this agony of mind, her eyes rested on the floor in despair, did Philip discover his mistress when he entered the room, and after affectionately enquiring how she found herself,

"I hope, madam," said he, "that nothing has happened to disturb you."

Jessica's tears now flowed fast. "Lack-a-day," said Philip," "that I should live to see you so sorrowful, when I would lay down my life to serve you, and when there is nobody in the wide world that I respect so much."

"Philip," said Jessica, "your dutiful services have, I trust, made a proper impression upon me, and could you do away the cause of my sufferings, I have no doubt you would." "That I would my lady," he replied, "or any thing else that would make you like what you once was."

"Jessica then proceeded to tell this faithful old servant that she had been unsuccessful in her enquiries after the Signor; and to whom I can next apply for counsel or assistance," continued she, "I know not; unfortunate indeed am I to have returned to my own country, unwelcomed and unconsoled by the voice of a single friend."

"For my part," said Philip, "ma-

dam, I do not see that we are at all likely to meet such people here, as we've left behind us; and as for advice, it is not what my abilities are able to give, and I hope I know my place too well to offer it; but, in my poor opinion, if you are only to stay here for the bad enjoyment of being very unhappy, which offers no comfort, we had better go back to where we came from.

"There's young miss, it would make her happier than she's been this many a day; bless her little heart, madam, I can just see how she would come running up to us when we got back again, and how merry she would be, giving the servants another treat; and perhaps not forgetting her old partner, poor Philip, who never danced with such a lady in all his born days, nor never will again for that matter. Aye, aye, but them days are not going to come over again."

Whilst Philip was engaged in his

harangue, Jessica was reflecting on the necessity of parting with the female servant whom she had brought over. Situated as she was, unknowing when and under what circumstances she might meet Valdesa, and being well convinced that her finances, without some addition to them, must soon fail her, she considered, that to retain this young woman longer would be very imprudent, and resolved upon waiting on the child herself. "But can I part with her," asked she, "without doing her great injustice? I have brought her from her own country, without foreseeing the consequences, and ignorant of the events that have awaited me here, to send her from me, except for some equally, or more eligible situation, would certainly be an act of cruelty, which I could not answer to my conscience, and to defray the expences of her passage back to Montpelier, would render the matter as expensive as keeping her here."

She determined therefore to retain her in her service until some more eligible situation occurred.

One tedious day prepared the way for another, and alone, without the friendly attentions or soothing conversation of a single being, did the cheerless hours of Jessica pass away.

Her situation was perhaps still more dreary, from the contrast which it exhibited to her late one, in which every wish had been anticipated, and every external comfort her own.

As she sat in the window, her little one laying sleeping in her lap, observing the inhabitants of a busy metropolis passing to and fro, "What am I," she would frequently exclaim, "in this scene, where each individual seems to have some pursuit of gain, or some scheme of pleasure? I am forlorn, deserted, no pursuit, no plan that promises success or comfort! Sad was the hours in which I quitted this country; I took

with me a friend who loved and valued me—I have lost him—I return here where there is no one to befriend me, or interest himself in my fate."

She had not yet received any message from Mr. Gurney, and the hope of discovering Valdesa had now become almost extinct; wearied with conjectures that only terminated in sorrow, Jessica resigned herself with fortitude to her hopeless, cheerless fate.

CHAPTER LXVI.

No more shall the voice of flattery assail thy ear,
nor the eye of pleasure beam on thee.

EMILIE was still in the convent, where she remained free from the persecutions of the Marchese, and in the affectionate care and attentions, of the abbess, she experienced that degree of comfort to which she had long been a stranger.

The Chevalier had several times written to her, and she had the satisfaction of finding his affectionate sentiments for herself, still unchanged, and unabated. He had gained additional rank in his military department, which

had greatly encreased his former emoluments, and he was now looking forward to the period, in which he might be enabled to return to Emilie, and by uniting himself with her, terminate their mutual anxiety and suspence.

Emilie communicated this circumstance to the abbess, who congratulated her upon her present fair prospects.

" Though you see me in a single state," she observed, " I am not an enemy to marriage, nor do I by any means approve of a life of celibacy, except under particular circumstances. Every responsible being ought, I concieve, to place himself in that situation in which he can most materially benefit society. We are not to enquire which is the road that offers us ease and pleasure; this enquiry might be proper for those who are travelling alone, on the journey of life; but as that cannot be, as there is no individual who has not some dependant upon him, some claim

upon his time, his talents, or his property, his consideration ought to be in what way, he can most materially promote their advantage.

"It might perhaps, by many persons, be deemed a romantic sentiment, but I am firmly of opinion, that where a woman has formed any very strong attachment, where the feelings that it excites are of such a nature as to prevent her ever viewing any other object in the same light, from what cause soever that connection is dissolved, she ought not to marry; at least, I have known very few whom, so situated, I should have advised to enter into a lasting union.

"Thus circumstanced was I when I first entered these walls; I found many here to whom I fondly hoped I might, by my advice, or assistance, in one way or other, prove useful. I trust that I have hitherto succeeded in the attempt to be so, and have been rendered hap-

pier from that circumstance, than in any other situation I could have been." Emilie agreed with the benevolent abbess in this sentiment. "Though there is an English author," said she, "whose works I much admire, that wholly differs from us in opinion; he observes, that an ill assorted marriage is preferable to a life of cheerless celibacy." "How widely," said the abbess, "do I dissent from him, for the latter state certainly affords many opportunities of extensive usefulness, particularly when the individual is blest with the gifts of fortune.

"Some of the happiest, as well as the most respectable characters I have known, were what are commonly called old maids. No odium, I conceive, can be more unjust, than that which too generally attaches to that epithet. It is a vulgar opinion, which has diffused itself but too widely."

Emilie now enquired if the abbess

had heard any thing of sister Paulina, aad learned that she had visited her that day. "What a lingering, hopeless state is her's," said Emilie, the abbess shook her head, "Yes, sister Paulina's release," said she, "will indeed be happy, for never since the hour in which she entered these walls, twenty-two years ago, have I seen the smile of joy light up her countenance. There is something mysterious there, something which I cannot penetrate, and her entrance here was as singular as her deportment since; it will be twenty-two years this very winter, that on a cold stormy night a carriage stopt at the gate; I was seated by the fire with my departed friend, our late abbess, who was busily employed in reading a translation from one of the Greek fathers; absorbed in our attention to the book, the bell rang very loudly before we were sensible of the sound. The porter came into the room to inform us that a

lady without desired to speak with the abbess. She ordered that the lady might be shewn into the room, to which we commonly introduce strangers.

" My friend was then much indisposed, and I requested she would accept the assistance of my arm; I supported her to the room, where we found a beautiful young woman, dressed in deep mourning, a long black veil half concealing her face, seated on the sofa; she arose on the entrance of the abbess, and I had then an opportunity of observing her more narrowly.—Her form was one of the loveliest I ever beheld; but there was an expression in her countenance that baffles all description, something that sunk more deeply into the heart of the beholder than any I had ever yet seen; her hair, which flowed in ringlets on her shoulders, was of a dark flaxen colour, and her eyes a deep azure, the expression of which, as she turned them on the abbess, I shall never, I think, forget.

"She solicited to be received into the convent. "I am forlorn, deserted, and miserable," said she, "it is your province to succour the unfortunate, in me you behold one on whom the sun of happiness can never shine more."

"The abbess, whose heart was open as day to melting charity, kindly extended to her her protection; she remained here, as a boarder, nearly three years, and then took the veil, and never, I think, was I present at a more affecting scene.

"Sister Paulina's patient virtues have, however, much endeared her to me; I see that she is unhappy, and that circumstance excites my compassion; but as the cause might not be within my power to remove, that I have never enquired into."

Emilie now rose to depart, she threw on her veil and walked out; the air was cold, and the sky seemed to threaten an approaching storm, and as she seated

herself on the shattered trunk of an old tree, that part of the abbess's conversation, that regarded sister Paulina, recurred to her mind.

The description of her person agreed with that of the picture in Emilie's possession, and she again examined it, yet all terminated in conjecture. She once hesitated whether or not she should shew this picture to sister Paulina; yet improbable as such a circumstance appeared, should it prove to be her resemblance, Emilie felt that she must then be under the necessity of entering into the history attached to the possession of them, and wounding her yet more deeply; she therefore resolved, after some deliberation, to leave the developement of this mystery to time or chance.

In the course of that day, however, an incident occurred, that she conceived might tend either to the complete discovery of the mystery, or leave her in perpetual doubt. She was called to the

chamber of sister Paulina by one of the sisters, who informed her that Paulina was dying.

The wind whistled around the walls of the convent, the rain beat in torrents against the casement, and as Emilie, silent and sad, seated herself by the bed, the convulsive sighs of Paulina, and the loud storm without, entered into her heart; yet o'er that poor sufferer the bleak winds must soon but vainly rend their fury, and as she cast on Emilie a look which seemed to say, rejoice with me, Emilie grasped her hand.

The abbess supported Paulina in her arms, the traces of death were deeply impressed on her care-worn countenance, her senses were perfectly clear, which seemed but to sharpen the agonies of dying.

On the abbess's being called from the room, Paulina pointed to a small cabinet; Emilie brought it to the bed. On motioning to her to open it, Paulina gave

to her charge two pictures, and attempted to say something to her, which Emilie could not understand. She seemed perfectly satisfied, however, when she had given to her the assurance that she would preserve them faithfully, and again reclined on the bed.

The abbess returned to the room, and Emilie with her waited in calmness the approaching hour in which this poor shattered bark was to be quietly sheltered in the haven of rest. Tranquilly did sister Paulina sink into the arms of death.

"Her look was calm, her heart was cold and still,
"As if the world had never used her ill."

Emilie sat by her poor remains, and grief was for a few moments suspended by the sensation of awe which overpowers the mind, in beholding vitality changed into a lifeless clod. This was the first time that she had been present at a death-bed scene, and her emotions were such as not to admit of tears.

The abbess at length prevailed with her to quit the room, and after kneeling for a moment by the side of the departed, and pouring forth her prayers for her eternal happiness, Emilie retired to her own apartment.

The pictures which Paulina had presented to her, she now prepared to examine, and placing her lamp upon the table, she took them from her pocket: she threw her eyes across the chamber, a sudden chillness came over her, she took up the pictures, then laid them down again, and walked to and fro in the apartment, as if wanting resolution to examine them. Anxious as she was for the developement of the mystery, yet her feelings towards the Marchese had now risen nearly to abhorrence. She tremblingly unclosed the case of one of them, she discovered the features of a stranger dressed in a military uniform, of youthful appearance, and open, generous countenance, in which she per-

ceived a strong resemblance to sister Paulina, and concluded it was the brother, whose fatal death she had so bitterly lamented.

As Emilie placed the portrait on the table, and reflected on the sad termination of Carlini's life, the miseries of his sister all proceeding from one dreadful source, she felt her detestation of the Marchese's character encrease.

"If he has," said she, "been the instrument of so much calamity, so many evils, how grateful should I be, that I have so fortunately escaped from his persecutions: yet it is possible that he may not be the same, but yet," she paused, and opening the remaining case, the tears at length burst from her eyes; her frame shook, the truth was disclosed, the mystery unravelled, she beheld the features of that being who had caused her so much misery, the resemblance of the Marchese Chiaramonti, she shuddered, as after contemplating the

countenance for a few moments, she closed the case, and deposited the pictures in the dressing box.

It was certain then that sister Paulina was that wife to whom the warning alluded, but Emilie feared that there might yet be another in existence, rendered wretched by the Marchese's perfidy, for these pictures did not afford the least clue to the story of the castle.

Emilie prepared to retire for the night: she determined to address the Chevalier on the discovery which she had made, since the death of Sister Paulina had freed her from the necessity of secrecy on that subject.

CHAPTER LXVII.

La misericorde, la justice—Mon pere, où peut on les trouver? Dans le ciel, sans doute; mais sur la terre, jamais, jamais.

ELISABETH, ou LES EXILES DE SIBERIE.

Compassion, justice—My father, where may we find them? In heaven, without doubt; but on earth, never, never.

JESSICA had now been six months in London, where she remained in total ignorance of the abode and situation of her husband; oppressed by the horrors of poverty, added to her mental afflictions, there were moments in which her heart sunk at the prospect before her.

The note for a hundred pounds, which Monsieur Delaborde had presented to her on the eve of her departure from Montpelier, had been nearly expended during her passage, and, added to her own little stock of valuables, she had been under the necessity of parting with the presents of Madamoiselle. Her picture, however, which Jessica most valued, she still hoped it would be in her power to retain the possession of. "Should my child want bread," said she, "I must then consent to part with it, no other consideration shall induce me to forego that valued gift."

The library, plate, and furniture of Mr. Hanbury, had been disposed of during the residence of Jessica and her husband at Montpelier, and immediately subsequent to his decease, the money which the sale produced had been remitted to them there, so that from that and every other resource Jessica was cut off.

"Philip," said she, when that old

servant entered the room to receive some orders from his mistress; "Philip, we must be as economical as possible, for my finances are nearly exhausted."

"Madam," said he, "I will do the best for you that is in my power, times are bad enough to be sure, but when I forsake my mistress, I shall deserve worse things than have befallen me yet. No, madam!" whilst the tears burst from his eyes, "God knows, if I could see you happier, I could do yet; I have not forgot how to work, though I am not so young as I once was."

Jessica felt her spirits wholly forsake her on this address, and clasping her child to her bosom, "What," said she, "will become of thee, my poor fatherless boy?"

"He shall never want, whilst I can work, I can tell you that, my lady," said Philip, "and when I can't work any longer," bursting into tears, "then I will beg for him; his grandfather, your

dear father, would have done as much for me, and more too, and I have not forgot all your goodness, no, nor I hope I never shall. But, if I may make bold to speak my poor opinion, I can't think that the Signor acted generous, when he left my lady abroad, and has never come back again."

"Philip," said Jessica, looking angrily towards him, for she never suffered the slightest reflection to be cast upon her husband, "I wish I had nothing to reproach myself with; that I had accompanied your master, as it was my duty to have done."

"Why, madam," he replied, "I hope I have not said any thing wrong through my ignorance, but as for your duty, I've known you, madam, since you was the height of a table, and I never knew you do a wrong action yet, so its what's to come, and I will be proud to say that it was not in your nature." "Enough of this," said Jessica, "and now, Philip, I

wish you would have the kindness to enquire what I am indebted to the people below for the lodgings; it is now many weeks since they were paid, and I wish to reimburse them whilst the means are in my power."

"Why, madam," replied Philip, "if one could any way raise the money, it would be agreeable enough, for I have had bad words already about it."

"I am sorry," said Jessica, "that you should not have informed me of that circumstance sooner, that I might have endeavoured to do away with it, but I request you will now go down and bring me an account of what I stand indebted to them, that I may, if possible, answer their demands."

Philip now withdrew for that purpose, and left his mistress to the contemplation of her forlorn, deserted state; of any one act of extravagance, since her return to England, she could not accuse

herself, as she had practiced the most rigid economy in her mode of living; having even discharged the woman servant whom she had brought over, who, on expressing a desire of returning to Montpelier, Jessica had kindly sent thither.

Her necessary attendance upon her child had prevented her struggling for their support, and wholly unknown as she was in London, her efforts might not have proved successful.

From the Delabordes she had frequently heard, and their lively attachment to her seemed unabated; and had she communicated her pecuniary difficulties, to them she well knew they would have been instantly relieved; but she shrunk from the idea of incurring additional obligation even to that generous family.

She was engaged in this unhappy rumination, when Philip returned to the

room, and laid on the table the account he had received; she examined it, and laying it down again in mingled consternation and grief, "this," she said with a look of hopeless dejection, "far exceeds the limits of my finances, and," raising her eyes, "what I am next to do, or what must become of my child, I know not, but it will please the Almighty to befriend me in this trying hour."

The amount of the bill, as the people had contrived to swell it out, was thirty-nine pounds. Jessica emptied her purse on the table, and found that it amounted to nearly three times the sum which she now possessed; she cast her eyes on the money, and then turned them towards her old servant in silent despair.

"Madam," said Philip, "I have ten guineas which Madamoiselle gave to me, for which I am now more thankful to her goodness than before, though she did not know," he added, whilst the

tears tricked down his face, "that ever I should come into such a case as this; I wish I had more for your sake and dear little master's."

"No, Philip," said Jessica, "that must not be, I cannot consent to rob you in your old age of any little store which you have set apart for a time of necessity."

"Little enough, indeed, my lady," said he, "though I don't think it will ever be more wanted than it is at present," and leaving the room for a few minutes, he returned, and laying the money on the table, "I wish from my heart that it was a thousand guineas, and that you were happy enough to enjoy it." He now added to it the twelve pounds which Jessica had placed before her, "and now," said he, "madam, I will go down stairs, and see what I can do with these people, though they are hard hearted enough, God knows, for which I hope he will be pleased to for-

give them." He went down, and Jessica after some moments heard him in violent altercation with her landlady, who was speaking of persons coming from nobody knows where, to cheat honest people of the money they earned by their own endeavours; and returning to the room, his face burning with rage, "these people," said he, "madam, have no more compassion than so many wild beasts; they insist upon having every farthing of their money, or threaten to send us to prison. No, rather than my dear mistress, the daughter of such a man as her father, shall ever see the walls of a prison, I will beg or borrow of the first person that I can meet with."

"If they are determined," said Jessica, with assumed calmness, "to execute their threats, I have no method of preventing it; I do not possess the means of satisfying their demands to the full extent, nor have I any one to assist me.

I know not that I can answer their claims one moment sooner, confined within the walls of a prison, than by remaining here, but it will at least free them from the burthen which the residence of a poor unfortunate woman in their house, who has not the means of liquidating her debt, imposes upon them."

Jessica paused, and Philip bursting into tears, poured forth the bitterness of his spirit.

"If they do fulfil their wicked designs," said he, "I wish they may never know what it is to rest in their beds as long as ever they live, but they never will; for that matter, I told the woman below so just now." He now quitted the room, and Jessica, folding her child to her bosom, calmly seated herself by the fire waiting the event. Forlorn and unprotected as she was, she wished not to enter into any fruitless altercation with the people of the house, of whose want of compassion she had received a

recent proof; yet when she reflected on the scene of misery they were preparing for her, she was anxious for her child's sake that it should be averted.

"He may be exposed," said she, "to many evils which he is now sheltered from, the danger of contagious disease, the cold damps, the unwholesome air of such a place as my imagination paints a prison; no, my poor boy, thou shalt not be thus exposed, if thy mother can prevent it. I will humble myself before that brutal woman, and thy innocent smile shall prevail with her to relent."

She pressed the child yet more closely to her bosom, and descended to the apartment of the landlady, where she wept and entreated, but in vain; this woman was not formed in nature's softer mould; neither the tears of the mother, or the smiles of the child, had power to melt her from her unworthy purpose; she remained inexorable, and Jessica returned to her comfortless apartment, un-

cheared by any earthly consolation, save conscious rectitude.

"To what a world of misery," said she, addressing her infant, "has thy mother brought thee?" The little one smiled unconsciously in her face, and with a look of wild despair did she sit gazing upon him.

On that evening, however, she was arrested for the money; she had none to whom she could apply, and saw herself, with her innocent helpless child, conducted to the dreary confines of a prison.

The grief of old Philip was of too violent a nature to allow him to be of any real service to his mistress; but wherever she went he had determined to accompany her. Jessica seldom lost sight of that fortitude which her strong reasoning powers had endowed her with, yet, when the massive doors of that comfortless habitation turned on their hinges, and she contemplated the coun-

tenance of her conductor, as he led her through the long dreary galleries, that preceded the apartment which was designed for her, with one arm she clasped her infant son, and with the other leant on old Philip for support.

A solitary lamp, suspended from the ceiling, which served to render darkness more visible, increased the gloom of the surrounding objects, and when she had at length reached the wretched apartment where she was to take up her abode, she threw her eyes round it, and, exhausted by mental anguish, seated herself on a miserable flock bed in one corner of the room. Old Philip leaned against the wall, and sobbed aloud. "Oh," said he, "if any one had ever told me, that I should have lived to see such a sight as this; if my poor old master had lived, it never would have happened, but God knows what is best for us poor mortals."

"And I trust," said Jessica, now

speaking calmly, that it will yet please him to befriend and support us; his protection is not confined to the mansions of affluence,—the abode of splendour; it will penetrate into the gloomy confines of this prison, and extend to its forlorn and wretched inhabitants."

The man who had shewn them into the room, now appeared to inform Philip, that they were locking the doors for the night. "It is not of much consequence," said he to him; "I suppose you have clean straw somewhere, and I can sleep as well there as upon the best bed in England; so long as I know that my mistress is here, there is not much sleep for me; but I have been turned out of other places, and the deuce is in it if I am to be turned out of a prison too. You may treat people well when they do come here, I think, for it is a thing they are not over anxious about." He found, however,

that he must now be under the necessity of leaving his mistress, but promised to be with her again early the following morning.

CHAPTER LVI.

'Tis this that gilds the horror of our night,
When wealth forsakes us, and when friends are few;
When friends are faithless, or when foes pursue,
'Tis this that wards the blow or stills the smart,
Disarms affliction and repels it's dart.

CROMEK'S RELIQUES OF BURNS.

AFTER the man had turned the key in the door, Jessica saw herself, for the first time, bereaved of every friend, yet to that power who succours the unfortutate she looked up for consolation; her thoughts glanced towards the Signor, yet not one sentiment injurious to him reigned in her heart; could she have imagined that she should ever see him more, her present sufferings would have

appeared light to her, but she feared that that enjoyment she must never more hope to experience; accustomed from her youth to exert her reasoning faculties, and to resign herself with calmness to inevitable misfortune, no expression of murmuring in this dreadful hour escaped her lips; but whilst the tear rolling down her cheek, as she gazed at her child, bespoke a mother's feelings, the composure with which she prepared herself for her miserable situation, displayed the steady fortitude of a Christian.

The generosity of her mind was fully proved, when, in looking round on her cheerless prospects, where there was none which offered her a moment's comfort, she exclaimed, "What are my feelings now, though deprived of every enjoyment, cut off from the blessings of liberty, and languishing in a prison, encompassed by profligacy and want; what are they in comparison of what I suffered when, surrounded by the comforts of

life, and was laboring under the dreadful supposition that my husband was a murderer;" yet, reflection must have convinced her that to this wretched state that husbaud had in fact reduced her.

She laid her infant on the bed, who slept calmly, unconscious of the calamities of his mother, and throwing her great coat round her, she endeavoured to obtain some rest also; her slumbers were however broken by frightful visions; she arose as soon as it was light, and after she had been some moments employed in considering where or how she should obtain some nourishment for her little one when he awoke, a gentle knock at the door announced old Philip; he had during his absence thought of her wants, and came in loaded with provisions. "When they turned me out last night, my lady," said he, "I thought the shops would not be opened so soon as I wished to come in the morning, so I went out last night to seek about for

something for you and young master." "And where, Philip," said Jessica, "have you rested during the last weary night?" "I found a lodging," said he, "madam, hard by; a man's never at a loss if he has money in his pocket. I am only sorry I parted with that ten guineas to that old hard hearted woman at the lodgings, for she could only have sent my mistress here, if she had not got a farthing, and it might have been some help now for you and young master." "I had much rather," said Jessica, "that the money was appropriated as it is to satisfy the claims of justice; want of humanity on her part would afford no excuse for want of honesty on mine; no, I am satisfied, much better satisfied, that she has received the money, and believe me, Philip, could I have foreseen the unhappy consequences that have ensued, it would have made no alteration in my conduct."

"No, I don't think it would, madam, you are over-like my poor master for that."

The child now awoke, and Jessica prepared some nourishment for him; she was, however, much hurt to find that either from the sharp air of the night, or his removal to their present wretched abode, he had caught a severe cold, and as she lifted him from the bed, with the intention of giving him some food, he rested his little head against her bosom, and seemed unwilling to be disturbed.

"This child," said she to Philip, "is I fear very unwell, and I know not what I can do for him, should his disorder increase, or to whom I can apply." "Why, madam," replied he, "I hope there are some good people left in the world, though it's some time since I have seen their face; if young master should be worse, I must go for a doctor."

The little boy however continued the

whole of that day unwell, and Jessica now apprehended symptoms of a fever.

The money which she had paid to the woman at the lodgings was the whole of her remaining stock; from Philip's conversation, she gathered that he had little left, and as she rested her arm against the grated window of the prison in silent anguish, she considered what she could further do for the support of her child, or what must become of them; she had previously determined that no consideration should again induce her to expose herself to insult, by an application to lady Stanhope; yet, when she turned to the bed, and saw her infant stretched there, pale and sick, without any medical assistance, "For thy sake," she exclaimed, "then, my child, I will overcome these scruples, and will a second time incur the pain of a refusal, the humiliating sense of obligation to the unworthy."

She requested Philip would procure

her pen and ink, and wrote to her ladyship, mentioning to her the unhappy circumstance in which she was placed, and the indisposition of her child.

Philip undertook to deliver the note; "Though," said he, "madam, I don't think it will be to much use; I've known lady Stanhope many years, and I never heard one good thing she did yet; but however she may take a turn, now that she is getting into years." He now set out with the letter.

Jessica seated herself by the bed side, where her little one was laid: "Should he be taken from me," said she, "my misery is then compleated; but why should I, for my own sake, thus selfishly desire that he be spared only to the endurance of calamity?" She knelt by him, and grasping his burning hand, she found that his fever was rapidly increasing; she rested her head beside him, and waited impatiently the return of

Philip, who at length, after an absence of nearly two hours, made his appearance.

"I thought," said he, "madam," as he opened the door, "that I should never have got back again; they have kept me all this time about writing a bit of a note, which you would have written in two minutes." He now took the note from his pocket, and Jessica eagerly and impatiently tore it open; its contents were—"Lady Stanhope begs she may not be troubled with further applications on a subject which is really very unpleasant; it cannot be expected that her ladyship should be in the habit of visiting prisons, and as her relations have long ago ceased to consult her, she cannot have any thing to do in so strange an affair."

As Jessica calmly folded up the note and placed it on the table on which she leaned, "To expect any thing like compassion from Lady Stanhope," said she,

" was indeed a visionary notion, and nothing but despair could have urged the application. But yet, my poor boy, thou must not be suffered to lie here without the assistance of any human being, because she is cruel and unfeeling; my child must have some medical aid if his poor wretched mother perish in the attempt." Her grief was now very violent, and Philip, without uttering one word, stole out of the room.

In less than half an hour he brought with him an apothecary, to whom he had applied for assistance; he felt the child's pulse, and pronounced his disorder to be a fever on the brain; he did not hold out much hope of his recovery. " In these cases," said he, " we have not the power of doing much, nature will be his best friend, and his fever must soon reach the crisis."

Whilst Jessica remained in doubt respecting the danger, she reasoned herself into a belief that she could endure

to part with him; but now, when her apprehensions were confirmed, her reason seemed threatening to forsake her.

The apothecary wrote a prescription for him, and sending Philip with it to his house, he staid by Jessica until he returned, and then took his leave with the promise of calling again in the course of the evening. Every hour, however, the violence of the fever increased; and she either knelt by the bed, wildly entreating that her child might be preserved, or traversed the apartment in silent anguish.

CHAPTER LXIX.

Il est vrai que les douleurs d'une mère s'elèvent au dessus de toutes les consolations humaines, et ne peuvent etre attaintes par rien de ce que vient de la terre.

ELISABETH.

It is certain that the griefs of a mother are beyond the reach of human consolation, and cannot be removed by any earthly power.

THE apothecary did not return so soon as he had promised, and she intreated Philip to go in search of him; her grief had produced such an effect on the old man, that he appeared nearly stupified, and silently prepared, whilst the tear was rolling down his cheek, to obey her commands.

The evening was closing in, and a solitary light in one corner of the room alone discovered its wretched inhabitants; wearied from want of rest, and exhausted by mental suffering, wildly gazing on the object so fondly loved, whom she feared must soon be torn from her, Jessica was leaning against the wall, pouring forth the anguish of her soul, when voices in the gallery for a moment arrested her attention; the boisterous mirth of some persons collected together in the next room prevented her hearing the conversation; she turned to the bed, and the convulsive motions of the infant, indicating approaching dissolution, roused her from her stupor.

She wildly clasped him to her bosom. "Oh, save my child!" said she, "Will no one save him?" she ran towards the door, where, overcome by the violence of her emotion, she fell on her knees, and was grasping the wall, her eyes raised in supplication, her arms stretched

out, her senses bewildered, when old Philip, accompanied by a stranger, had reached the apartment; they raised her up and conveyed her to the bed.

"What a scene of misery," said the stranger, "does this wretched abode present!" Jessica now opened her eyes, the only words which she articulated were, "save him," and again sunk back; they gave her some wine, and old Philip raised her in his arms and wept over her. Revived by the cordial she had swallowed she sprung up, and disengaging herself from his hold, again knelt down, praying wildly for the preservation of her infant.

The stranger now entreated her to be calm; she had a confused recollection of having somewhere heard his voice, and raising her eyes, she beheld the same old gentleman whom she had seen at Montpelier, and to whose kindness she had before been indebted.

"I trust," said he, "that it will

please the Almighty to restore your child. Poor innocent, how have you been brought into a situation like this; or what being can have been sufficiently inhuman to have thus afflicted you?"

The apothecary now arrived, and the stranger taking him aside, requested that he would strain every nerve for the preservation of his little patient. He now assured Jessica that she had caused herself unnecessary alarm; that the little boy was sleeping more calmly, and he had some hopes, from the alteration in his pulse, of his recovery. "Heaven bless you," said Jessica, clasping her hands whilst the tears streamed down her face, "and preserve you from sufferings like mine."

The apothecary withdrew, and the old gentleman continued to sit by her; the tears burst from his eyes as he compassionately looked at her woe-worn, haggard countenance; he would not disturb her by attempting to converse, but

told Philip that he would call again on the following day, and slipping some gold into his hand, "Be mindful," he said, "of this poor sufferer, and procure her every comfort which her present pitiable situation admits of." He then shook hands with her and quietly glided out of the room.

Assisted by Philip, she watched by her little one the remaining part of the night; for, at the solicitation of the stranger, the people had permitted him to remain there. He slept tranquilly, and in the morning appeared much easier.

"How grateful ought thy mother to be," said Jessica, "for the care which has been extended to her in the preservation of her child; the benevolent exertions of that compassionate being, who found her last night sinking beneath her afflictions, and tenderly comforted her drooping spirits."

She now enquired of Philip how he

had met with the old gentleman, and he informed her, that when he had hasted from her in search of the apothecary, he was crossing the court.

"I was sorrowful enough to be sure," said he, "my lady, for it was not a sight such as I had met every day to see you in a prison, and little master here just as good as dead, and to have left you without any money, and not to know where to get any; so just as I got to the gate that same old gentleman was coming up to it; I touched my hat to him, as was my duty, madam, and passed on; my heart misgave me too, for he looked so sorrowful himself that I could not help thinking that he would have had some pity for us; and as it was long enough since we had met with it, it would have been seasonable, particularly just then, when we stood very much in need of it. However as he was sauntering about the place, talking to the people, and asking them questions, I

thought I might, perhaps, meet with him when I came back again; well, I went on my errand, the doctor was not at home, and they said they would send him when he came in, so I came back dispirited as I have been of many a day, and not thinking that any thing good was going to befal us, when the gentleman popped upon me again. I forget now, my lady, how he brought it off, but he asked me, I remember, something about my distress. I am distressed enough, said I, and please your honour, if that will do me any good; and I've got a mistress here that's more distressed, for she's a little boy dying and nothing to help him with, and as worthy a woman as ever broke bread, I never thought to have seen her in such a place as this, your honour; he asked me then if he might come up and see if he could do any thing for you.

"I am going up myself, said I, if you please I will shew you the way,

for they are but dismal passages for strangers to go on by themselves.—However, he told me he was not a stranger here; more's the pity, said I, your honour, for I thought by that he was a debtor too; however, my lady, he followed me up stairs, and seemed to know the way very well."

CHAPTER LXX.

Oh cease not yet to beat, thou vital urn;
Wait ebbing life, oh wait, my love's return.
DARWIN.

HERE the conversation terminated, and Jessica waited in momentary expectation the re-appearance of the stranger: the day passed on however, and he did not visit her, and in the evening, exhausted by incessant watching, she fell into a deep sleep, as she sat by her child, who was still calmly reposing; his fever considerably abated.

When she awoke it was later than she apprehended; she desired Philip to light the lamp, she took the child on her lap

while he removed the pillows; when she heard steps in the passage approaching to the door of the room where she was, seated at the foot of the bed, her head rested on one knee whilst she hung over her infant son, she listened more attentively, and turned round to observe who entered.

The door opened,—in the uncertain gleam of twilight she did not instantly perceive by whom the stranger, who had first entered, was accompanied; she rose from the bed, and turning her eyes from him to his companion, she beheld Valdesa. "My husband!" she exclaimed, and was springing into his arms, when he regarded her with doubtful looks; he leaned against the wall, and beating his forehead, "what is it I see? my wife! and in a prison! gracious God! how has she been thus reduced? in what dreadful manner brought here?"

Jessica threw herself at his feet, and

clasping his knees, "I am indeed," said she, "your wife, that wife who pledged her vows to you at the altar,—who has never for one moment forgotten you;—reduced to the situation you see her, by the inhumanity of her fellow-creatures, miserable, but still innocent; innocent as when you first received the assurance of her love."

Valdesa's long restrained tears now burst forth, he raised her up, and folding her to his bosom, wept aloud. She now presented to him his child, the pledge of their mutual affection. "Receive this infant to your bosom," continued she, "love him and cherish him; in adversity's sad hour he first saw the light; for the sake of his father I have endured my sorrows, and guarded him with fond and zealous care."

Valdesa clasped his infant son in his arms, and tenderly embracing him, he gazed at him, and then at his mother. "Alas! my Jessica, I fear," said he,

" that you have suffered much, else why that expression of countenance,—those pale and haggard looks; what a wretch is your husband to have exposed you to miseries like these."

The stranger had been silently and attentively regarding this scene, his eye stedfastly fixed on Jessica, whilst his frame shook, and his features were convulsed, with the emotion which it created. Old Philip stood in one corner of the room, his hands clasped together, the tears pouring down his face. " Yet we are re-united," said Jessica, extending her hand to her husband, " re-united, though within the dreary confines of a prison; let not recurrence to the past cloud the felicity of this hour, which gives a wandering husband to the arms of his still faithful wife. I do not ask Valdesa how the interval of separation has been passed, whether in solitude, cherishing my remembrance, or mingling in the gay scenes

of the world forgetful of me; it is sufficient for me that he is again my husband, that I may once more possess his affections."

The stranger now burst into an agony of tears, and going up to them, he took the hand of each, and turning to Valdesa, "Let the past," said he, "afford you a useful lesson, learn from it, that the indulgence of suspicion is the bane of conjugal happiness, and may you no more be separated till the hand of death shall part you from each other."

Jessica now in his presence entered into a brief account of all that had befallen her since the departure of Valdesa from Montpelier; of what she suffered when she imagined that her husband was a murderer, the murderer of her brother; that she had been prevented disclosing to him her suppositions from a regard to his happiness; thus were the few words which he had accidentally overheard, and which had

since dwelt on his mind, producing sensations and suspicions which had led to the subsequent miseries of his wife and child, satisfactorily explained. She next adverted to the conduct of the Delabordes, her meeting with this stranger at Montpelier, and again expressed to him her acknowledgments, whilst she dwelt, with all the warmth that gratitude could inspire, on the friendly services of that family, who had so compassionately succoured her, and administered to her comfort and consolation. She then mentioned the conduct of her aunt, her visit to Mr. Gurney, and finally, the lodging scene, which, by bringing her there, had led to a termination of her sufferings.

The stranger now insisted upon liquidating the debt, in order that she might be immediately removed from thence. "Great have been your sufferings," said he, "and great will be your re-

ward; but you must be removed from this place; you must not longer be exposed to the danger of cold and disease, the wretched concomitants of a prison."

Jessica persisted in her determination of continuing there that night on her child's account, whom she feared to expose to the night air. "If such is your resolution, my Jessica," said her husband, "I must remain with you, since I cannot leave you here; he found her, however, firm in her intention: "though I do not like the idea of parting from you," said she, "even for a single hour, yet I cannot wish you to continue until to-morrow in this miserable place."

"Do not thus wound me, Jessica," he said, "by the implication which it would draw upon me, to suppose that I could leave you here, or taste of repose whilst separated from you; no, we have been already too long divided for our mutual peace."

The old gentleman seemed to approve this sentiment, and arose to take his leave, with the promise of visiting them early in the morning.

CHAPTER LXXI.

If thou would'st see the form of her
Thou destin'd to despair,
Unclose the casket, and behold
Her pictur'd image there.
BENSON'S POEMS AND BALLADS.

AFTER Valdesa had received from the stranger whom he had visited at the Crown and Anchor tavern, the manuscript, and determined to advertize the circumstance, he drew up a paper mentioning the particulars, along with his own place of abode, where application from the person alluded to might be made to him; many weeks however elapsed, and no one appeared to answer

to the insertion. His finances exhausted, his health weakened by mental inquietude, he had only been able to procure for himself the bare necessaries of life, by instructing a few pupils, the sons of a merchant in the city, whom he had accidentally met at the tavern, in the French and Italian languages.

One evening, on returning to his comfortless lodging at a late hour, he was informed that a gentleman had requested to speak with him; he had not however left his name, but had desired the servant to inform the Signor on his return, that he would call again in the morning. He waited his appearance, and about twelve o'clock a rap at the door announced his coming; he entered the room, and Valdésa was instantly struck by his resemblance to one whom he had somewhere seen; he requested him to be seated, and he then opened to him the purport of his visit.

"I am that unfortunate being," said

he, "who answers to the advertisement, which you caused to be inserted; the father of him whom you compassionately attended in his dying hours." Valdesa was much moved on beholding the emotion which accompanied these last words, and only bowed in assent to his address.

"For your care of him," continued he, "in that scene which closed his earthly existence, I do not offer you any thing but thanks, my prayers for your welfare could be of small avail; your services will meet their reward in another and a better world." He then proceeded to question Valdesa, as to the nature of his son's disorder, whether his sufferings had been very great.

Valdesa satisfied his mind on that head, and he appeared more composed.

After sitting a few minutes, his eyes rivetted on the ground in sorrowful abstraction, Valdesa rose to present to him

the manuscript; on receiving it, he again appeared much agitated. The tears poured down his face and choaked his utterance as he now attempted to say something to Valdesa, expressive of his gratitude; he rose to take his leave, and pressing the hand of his host, assured him that he should be happy to see him, or to render him any services in his power; "Though these," said he, "could be no return for the benefits you have conferred on me." He informed Valdesa where he might find him, and in a few days he returned his visit.

The conversation again turned upon his son, and he seemed to dwell upon it as a consolation. "I have wandered through the world for years, a stranger to peace," continued he, "your society for a few short hours has given me a pleasure which I never more expected to enjoy. Yes, I know that he is now at rest; unfortunate, misguided boy, the errors of thy father have been visited

on thee, and the injuries which he implanted have recoiled to his own bosom."

Valdesa could not penetrate into the mystery which appeared in the conversation of this old man, and sometimes feared that his senses were suffering; he urged him to visit him frequently, yet when he went to see him, he sat whole hours without speaking, and seemed insensible to all that passed.

It was the evening on which he was re-united to his wife that he went to the lodgings of the stranger and was informed that he was gone out, but was expected at home in a few minutes. Valdesa waited his appearance; he came in apparently more depressed, and more abstracted than usual.

Valdesa enquired if he was well. "As well," said he, "as a man can be supposed, who is surrounded by misery without, and within, who beholds the innocent suffer and listens to

their complaints, sometimes perhaps without the power of alleviating their calamities." "That," said Valdesa, "is indeed a terrible trial." "Yet light," he replied, "in comparison of what those must suffer, who have reduced them to such a situation.

"Picture to yourself a beautiful innocent young creature, deserted by her husband, confined within the walls of a prison, hanging over a dying child, destitute of bread, no friend, no means of procuring it. Is this a sight to awaken compassion, and call forth groans for the miseries of man?"

"It is indeed," said Valdesa, "a heart-rending picture for the mind to dwell upon." "Yet such a sight," replied the old gentleman, "I was last night witness to.—Not many months ago, I saw the same young woman abroad, surrounded by kind friends, by all the external comforts of life. I return to this country, mark the dreadful con-

trast, I find her deprived of all these, and languishing in captivity, unconsoled by the voice of one friend, abandoned by him who ought to protect her.

"Her husband fought a duel, he wounded his antagonist and he fled, she was left in a foreign country exposed to insult, thrown on the mercy of strangers, who, like the good Samaritan, took her to their habitation and bound up her broken heart. What unhappy circumstances have since driven her here, I know not; perhaps she comes in search of a husband who deserves not her care, since it was said that he took refuge in this country."

Valdesa raised his eye, and glanced it towards the stranger with an expression of horror. "Where," said he, in trembling agitation, "did these circumstances happen?" "Montpelier," said the stranger, "was the seat of these miseries." Valdesa shook, his lips quivered, his whole frame was convulsed.

"In me," he said, "you behold the wretched husband of her, whose miseries you have described."

The stranger regarded him with looks, in which astonishment and compassion combined. "Go then with me," said he, "to that miserable habitation, where I have left her and her infant child, and there contemplate the scene which I last night witnessed."

Valdesa, when his mind was more calmed, attempted to explain the circumstances that had thus long prevented his returning to his wife.

"Some fatal mistake," said the old man, "has, I doubt not, embittered your repose, and all will, I trust, terminate in your comfort."

He now led Valdesa to the prison, where the scene passed which has been already described.

In the morning he repeated his visit, and after discharging the debt for which Jessica had been arrested, sent his

carriage to conduct her and her infant to his lodgings, where he insisted upon old Philip accompanying her.

"The Signor's lodgings," said he, "are small; with me you shall reside until we can manage better for you."

CHAPTER LXXII.

Of all the numerous ills that hurt our peace,
That press the soul, or wring the mind with anguish
Beyond comparison, the worst are those
That to our folly, or our guilt we owe.
In ev'ry other circumstance the mind
Has this to say, "It was no deed of mine."

CROMEK'S RELIQUES OF BURNS.

JESSICA now saw herself again comfortably situated, the dark cloud which had hung over was dispersed, and had given place to sun-shine and joy; restored to Valdesa, freed from the prison's gloom, her child's health established, she had no wish ungratified.

She sat down to write to Madamoiselle Delaborde the happy intelligence

of her meeting with her husband; that amiable family had sympathized with her in the hour of adversity, and she hastened to impart to them those tidings in which she knew they would so sincerely rejoice; she omitted not to mention her obligations to the stranger, by whose compassion she had been preserved, and to whom she owed her restoration to the Signor. At dinner she was joined by her husband and the old gentleman, who had gone to the lodgings of the former, to discharge them, since Valdesa had yielded to his entreaties to take up their abode with him. Jessica observed, and with much regret, his frequent fits of melancholy abstraction, and mentioned this circumstance to the Signor, who entered into the history which his son had given to him. "How wonderful," said she, "that this man, whose whole life seems devoted to purposes the most benevolent, should have any errors of conduct

in earlier life, to charge himself with." She then thought of what Delaborde had said, that perhaps his virtuous actions were the fruits of repentance.

"There is something more," said Valdesa, "than meets the ear, something with which we are not yet acquainted, a secret cause for the agitation which I have frequently witnessed in our host, particularly, when in conversation, he has sometimes adverted to his younger days." He now joined them, and the conversation terminated.

As they were sat in the evening however, Jessica spoke of the revolutions which so frequently took place within the space of a few hours. "How forlorn, deserted, and unhappy," said she, "was I at this hour last night; how little did I anticipate the comforts that I now enjoy."

The stranger turned to her on this observation, and sighing deeply, "Yet you possessed one comfort," said he,

" even within the walls of your pri[illegible], for which many, who were ranging abroad at liberty, might in that hour have envied you;—the consciousness of innocence."

Jessica could not avoid glancing her eye towards Valdesa, at this observation; " yes, that," he continued, " is indeed a most valuable possession, since its preservation rests with ourselves, and none can deprive us of it." He walked across the apartment, he paused, he stopt, and leaning his head against the window, " Happy and enviable the mortal," said he, " who possesses that treasure." The tears fell from his eyes, and chased each other down his burning cheek; he sat down and seemed lost in thought.

" You have thus long," he continued, " remained unacquainted with the name of your host, but as you have rendered him a service," turning to Valdesa, " which he can never repay, by impart-

ing that consolation to a mind torn, lacerated, drooping beneath its sorrows, which no other mortal could have effected, we must no longer be strangers to each other; my name, and the unhappy circumstances which are connected with it, shall be freely revealed to you."

"I shall pass over the earlier years of my life, since they afford nothing worthy of your attention, and are not connected with the main of my story."

"I was the younger son of a man, whose birth and fortune made him of consequence in that part of the world in which he lived, though his disposition was proud and unsocial, and his society was little cultivated, except by those who were dependent on his favors; yet his conduct was marked by a strict sense of honour, and he would have shrunk from the most remote idea of meanness in any sentiment or action."

"Of my mother, I shall not speak, since I cannot bear to dwell on her re-

membrance, and should fail in any attempt to do justice to her virtues."

"I had a brother too, who was my senior in years, and excelled me in every manly virtue and elegant accomplishment. A young woman, who sometimes visited at my father's house, to whom my mother extended her friendship, I conceived a strong affection for; she was my inferior in birth, the daughter of our tutor. This boyish passion I carefully concealed, yet frequently regarded my brother with jealous eyes. I imagined that he loved her, and the rancour which this circumstance created in my bosom daily increased, till at length my affection for him wholly yielded to these petty suspicions: I became reserved towards him, and frequently behaved with a degree of petulance, which excited his concern and surprise."

"He was open, generous, and feeling; no narrow sentiment or prejudice

reigned in his bosom; I saw my own inferiority; I envied him, and that circumstance led to more fatal passions. At this period my mother died, and I now returned from the house of the gentleman under whose care I was, and took up my residence entirely under my father's roof. My attachment to Caroline hourly gained strength, and it was with secret joy that I heard my brother, for a short period, propose to leave this country."

"To Caroline's father I made known my attachment for her, and interest prompted him to favor my views."

"Sad was the hour when I revealed my passion for her, and confided in that being who led me on to misery and error."

"This man accompanied my brother abroad, and during their absence, I was privately married to his daughter. She was young and beautiful, and with youth and beauty we connect the idea

of innocence." Here the stranger paused. "I dreaded the idea of my brother's return, fearing that he might supplant me in her affections; to avoid this I married her, and then wrote to inform her father of our union. Selfish, artful, and unfeeling, with every appearance of disinterestedness, candour, and humanity, he was well acquainted with the human heart, and knew how to wind the dispositions of man to his own purposes. Dark hints and artful insinuations, though their operations are slower, are yet sometimes more effectual in their influence on the mind, than open accusation or attack on the person against whom they are intended to prejudice us. It was the purpose of that man, to whom I owe so many miseries, to alienate me from my brother; this was most effectually done. From hints which he continually threw out to his disadvantage, I began to regard him as a factitious character; yet there were

moments when the brilliancy of his virtues darted through the mist of prejudice, and I shrunk at my own inferiority."

"My marriage was carefully concealed from my father, and from my wife's, I had no resentment to fear; he affected indeed to feel it, but that was a veil put on to prevent my penetrating into his mercenary views. I was now rendered completely his tool, and each day involved me more deeply in his designs. He yet remained abroad with my brother, and every letter which I received was filled with insinuations to his disadvantage. I heard of his dissipations with sensations of surprize. 'How artfully,' have I often exclaimed, 'has he thus long concealed his real propensities, and how much has my father been the dupe of his artifices.' I determined that he should be so no longer, and occasionally repeated to him different passages from my friend's letters, which

were calculated to favour my views; for I did not now conceive that there would be the least injustice in endeavouring to supplant a brother in his father's affections. How does the bitter pang of self-reproach visit my heart, and the blush of shame still tinge my aged cheek, when I reflect on these things! I will pass over the means which were taken to alienate my father's affections from that being, who nourished a father's fondest regard; suffice it to say that it was done."

The stranger stopt, and seemed overcome by the violence of his emotion. "My father died, I saw myself in possession of a splendid fortune: my wife was now raised to that pinnacle of greatness which she had so long been ambitious of obtaining. Yet, in my solitary walks through the rich demesne, I now envied the peasant who was returning to his thatched roof after the weary labours of the day; his was the

portion of virtuous industry; no fraud attended the procuring of his morsel, and after his nightly meal he could repose his head in peace. Not so the possessor of that lordly mansion, which reared its proud head above the humble cottage.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Thus even-handed justice returns the poisoned chalice to its own lips.

SHAKESPEARE.

"AFTER that fervor of passion had subsided, I discovered many unamiable propensities in the woman I had chosen; these filled me with secret bitterness, and I then saw the littleness of that possession for which I had sacrificed integrity and honour; yet I loved her, though there were many parts of her conduct which it was impossible to approve; I attributed that however to the levity which sometimes takes possession of the mind of a female, parti-

cularly on a sudden elevation to greatness.

" She brought me a son, and this tie rivetted me more closely to her. I fondly hoped that the important duties of a mother would lead her to reflect, and that I might enjoy that rational comfort which I had looked forward to; but in which I had thus long been so cruelly disappointed. In this hope, however, I saw myself deceived, day after day passed on, but brought me no return of happiness or peace. I reasoned, I remonstrated, I entreated, but all in vain; at length I applied to her father, who declined interfering in our disputes.

" The veil had long been rent aside, and I had seen this man in his native garb. I found how egregiously I had been mistaken in his character, and I now avoided his society as carefully, as with avidity I had once sought it.

" My country was now intolerable to

me, and I determined to visit some possessions which I had in the West Indies; I proposed to my wife to accompany me, and she remonstrated on the cruelty of such a sacrifice; I had previously prepared my mind for this refusal, and had resolved that in this one instance my wishes should be complied with.—She embarked with me, accompanied by her infant son; her conduct whilst abroad frequently irritated my mind and filled me with disgust. I returned to my native clime, sickened with her follies, and drooping at the prospect before me.

" Amidst all her improprieties I had preserved a reliance on her sense of rectitude, and believed that depravity had no share in her errors.—Here then I was sorrowfully undeceived—" The old man paused, he leaned against the window, and wept aloud. " She fled from me to the arms of a seducer, the fatal truth was then revealed, I found that I had

never possessed her affections, that she had been bound to me by mercenary views; the spell was dissolved, the enchantment fled, and I awoke to real unfading misery. In a distant country, sheltered in the arms of her paramour, she yet lives; he is now her husband." Here again the old man paused. "Never," he said, "since that sad hour in which I discovered her guilt, have I known the enjoyment of repose. Years have passed over me since this terrible event; the sun rises and finishes its course, yet finds me still miserable, forlorn, a stranger to the blessings of contentment; to visit the abode of poverty, to administer to the sick, and clothe the naked, to alleviate the miseries of my poor fellow-beings, is now the only ray of comfort that darts upon my gloomy path.—Oh, my brother! whether you are wandering on the earth, a solitary being, or united to her whom your soul loved, you enjoy that serenity of heart which I

must never more taste. Your injuries have been avenged in my miseries, they have been visited on me and my offspring in a tenfold degree; bitter was the hour in which I suffered myself to be seduced from the path of rectitude. O, Hanbury, could I yet fold you to my aching heart, and obtain your forgiveness, I might then hope to close my weary eyes in peace."

"Hanbury!" exclaimed Jessica, "what is that I hear, the brother of my earliest, dearest friend, my benefactor and my guide; over his grave have I poured forth the bitter tear, and in the hour of solitude and adversity dwelt in the remembrance of his sufferings;" she rose, and clasping her hands, "ever must his memory by me be fondly cherished, never can the recollection of his placid countenance, his patient virtues, be erazed from my heart."

The stranger silently regarded her whilst rivetted to the spot, his eyes fixed

in wild expression on her countenance, she thus revealed to him her knowledge of his brother; she stopped. "And is he then no more," said he, grasping her hand, "has the grave then terminated his sufferings, and does he rest in peace?"

"These arms," said Jessica, "supported him in his dying hour, and were folded in his last embrace, o'er his tomb you beheld me sorrowing, and tenderly compassionated my misery. In him I have lost a friend who can never be restored, he has left a void in my heart that can only by fond recollection be supplied."

The stranger clasped her to his arms whilst floods of tears poured down his furrowed cheek. "Behold in me," he continued, "the friend whom you have lost; forgive his injuries, and regard me as a father; in your society shall my aching heart repose, and from you shall a contrite spirit seek support and conso-

lation;" and dropping on one knee, "I thank thee, O God, that in the hour of bitterness thou hast sent her to me, and vouchsafed the means of atoning for the injuries which I inflicted." He rose, and going to Valdesa, "From this moment," he continued, "you must share with me, you are mine, and all that I possess is your's."

Jessica was lost in surprise on this discovery; she could not, whilst she witnessed the sufferings of her host, give way to those emotions which his story had awakened; when she thought of her beloved friend, her tears flowed afresh, and she felt that she could never experience any other sensation than pity for the being who had injured him; yet she saw the blush of shame pass over his cheek, the tear of repentance trickle down it, and she had too much of the milk of human kindness to harbour resentment against such an object.

She thought how Mr. Hanbury would

have folded him to his embrace, and with what generous pity he would have extended to him his forgiveness, and she endeavoured to imitate this part of his conduct.

After the old man had recovered some degree of composure, he expressed a wish that Valdesa and Jessica, with their son, would continue with him. "I am old and solitary," continued he, "and it would be a consolation to me that the same kind being, who closed the eyes of my brother, should stay by me also." To this proposal Valdesa assented, and Jessica assured him that it would be a pleasure to her to have the power of rendering him any service.

He seemed tranquilized on this assurance; day after day passed, he still continued his visits to the mansions of pain and penury, and always returned more composed to his own habitation.

One evening as they were sat, Jessica was speaking of her friends at Montpe-

lier, and expressing her warm sense of the many obligations she owed them, and her wish of seeing them all once more. Whilst she was speaking, Philip entered the room, "You would rejoice, I dare say," said she, turning to him, "to see your favourite, Madamoiselle, again." "That I should, madam," said he, "and to thank her for all her goodness, for I have not found any like it, except indeed," turning to their host, "your honour's, for which I hope we are truly thankful. You found my mistress and young master in a poor condition, God knows, and they might have perished but for you; and that they should turn out to be old particulars of my late dear master's, your worthy good brother's, is something as odd as ever happened to me yet; and I have had my share of queer accidents, though never one more than your finding us in that prison."

"If it would afford you all so much

pleasure," said Mr. Hanbury, turning to Jessica, "to visit Montpelier again, it is an indulgence that may be easily obtained. I confess that there are some reasons why I should wish to be of your party."

"If that is the case," returned Valdesa, "I think we cannot do better than by taking this method of returning our grateful acknowledgements to the Delabordes, and giving Jessica an opportunity of seeing them once more; for as I suppose I am in future to consider myself an Englishman, this voyage may probably terminate our wanderings."

When the old man had withdrawn, Jessica proposed to Valdesa to accompany her on a walk, which she was anxious to take; long confinement had already impaired her health, and she was solicitous for its restoration on account of her husband and child, to whom it was of material consequence.

They set out, and as they were sauntering in the park she observed a form at some distance which was familiar to her, and when she approached nearer, to her great joy beheld her friend Matilda; their meeting was such as might be imagined after a long separation.

Jessica learned that she had returned from Ireland a few days before, where she had been to celebrate the nuptials of one of her sisters; "but I am expecting her," said she, "in a few minutes, and my husband has just now left me, in search of the party."

Valdesa then enquired after the health of his old friend, and learned that it was considerably amended. "And I hope," said Jessica, "that the connection your sister has formed, is such a one as you approve." "Perfectly so," said Matilda, "for the gentleman is very much her superior in rank and fortune, and I believe him to be truly worthy. It was by mere accident he met with

her; after my arrival in England I was extremely ill, and my husband wrote to Mary, informing her of the circumstance; she immediately embarked, and on board the packet in which she sailed, her husband first saw her.

"He is now bringing her to his seat in the neighbourhood of Bath; but I see them approaching, and shall be very proud in an opportunity of introducing them to you."

The party had by this time got so near to the place where they were sat, that Jessica had an opportunity of distinguishing the individuals of it, and to her great surprise discovered in the husband of Matilda's sister, her old admirer Compton; he instantly recollected her, and after paying his respects to her, introduced his wife, whom Jessica found equally modest and unassuming with her sister, with a smiling countenance and lovely complexion.

Valdesa conceived that it might not

be pleasant to their host to invite so large a party to his lodgings, and as Jessica had much to say to her friend, they promised to call upon her the following day.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Oh! my offence is rank, it smells to heaven. It hath the primal, eldest, curse upon't—a brother's murder.

SHAKESPEARE.

It hath been already premised, that the Marchese was bound to the Conte and Valdesa by a compact of villainy; of what nature the compact was, or rather what was the crime in which they had mutually assisted, it may not be improper to make the reader acquainted. The Marquis Chiaramonti had been the accociate of the Conte, and setting out early in the path of deception, they had acquired a considera-

ble proficiency in it, even at an age when the mind in general is a stranger to its wiles. The Marquis, his senior brother in years, and father of the Chevalier, had married some years before the period of which we are speaking, a young and beautiful woman, though his inferior in rank and fortune, whose family resided in one of the cantons of Switzerland; the Marquis, in his occasional visits to them, regarded the happiness of his brother with envious eyes; he saw that he possessed the affections of a woman more lovely and more amiable than he had ever known; unused to the controul of his passions, that which he conceived for the wife of his brother, he attempted not to overcome; like the serpent he entered into their paradise, to destroy the felicity which they enjoyed.

Insinuating in his manners, polished in address, and refined in intellect, he

sought every method to gain an ascendency over the mind of the Marchesa.

At this time, her husband was under the necessity of leaving her, to inspect an estate in one of the distant provinces of Italy, and to the care of his brother he committed the treasure dearest to him, in the person of his wife: long he was absent; six months had already glided away, and he ceased to write to her with his usual punctuality: she continued to address him as usual, and his silence occasioned her the most terrible pangs: he had left her in a situation the most interesting to the feelings of a husband, and the time was hastening fast when his presence would have been soothing and consolatory.

The period arrived when she gave birth to the Chevalier; no husband to comfort and share her joy on this event, she requested his brother to inform him of the birth of his son, and her earnest desire that he would hasten home.

No letter, as it may be supposed, was forwarded to him; the Marquis had taken care to have those of both parties suppressed, and her husband remained as ignorant of her health and situation, as she of his; nothing would have prevented his flying to her on such an occasion as this, nor would he have remained so long absent from her, but detained by affairs in which it was impossible his presence could be dispensed with, he was flattered from day to day in the hope of their being so arranged, that he might embrace his wife, and now perhaps another object who had given her new claims to his heart.

One day as the Marchesa was sitting in the saloon, hushing to rest her infant son, and wondering at the long silence and absence of his father: "Has he forgot thy mother then," said she, "and all the pangs which she has suffered for his sake?" A blush of resentment passed across her

cheek, and the tear stole down it, and dropt on the face of her infant, at the possibility of such a change.

"But we will follow him," continued she, "yes, I will present to him his child, and bid its smile bring home to us his wandering affections."

She burst into tears, and at this moment her brother, accompanied by the Conte, entered the room; she blushed, and rising from her seat, quitted the apartment, but observed them, when she withdrew, in earnest conversation, sometimes pensive, and now speaking rapidly, as if the subject excited deep interest; and as the ideas which occur in moments like these are generally associated with the object dearest to us, she instantly thought of her husband; that something distressing had befallen him, or that perhaps he might be returning to her; the last conjecture she indulged as that most pleasing, and when she joined the Conte and Chiara-

monte at dinner, was anticipating the surprise which she imagined the latter intended for her, in the information of the return of her husband; his gravity however, and something of gloom which occasionally appeared, as she closely observed every movement of his countenance, again struck a damp to her heart; but on retiring from the table, the Marquis requested to speak with her, and addressing her as she entered the drawing room:

"It grieves me," said he, "my dear sister, to be the harbinger of tidings which I well know must deeply afflict you, and more particularly since they must tend to criminate my brother." "Of what do you speak," said she, in agony of impatience, "my husband, it is not possible." "Alas!" continued he, "I fear that title, in its most endearing sense, is lost to you; be not alarmed, he still exists, though not, I fear, for you."

"What is it," said she, "that you would imply—that the affections of my lord are alienated from me?"

He withdrew to the window in silence. "Why," interrupted she wildly, why do you not inform me of the extent of my sufferings? I have been harassed by anxiety, worn out by conjecture, destroy me then at once, do not protract an existence which the neglect of a husband has too long rendered miserable; yet I have a child, and for his sake I will awhile endure the miseries of my fate."

"Do not, my dear sister," replied the Marchese, "thus uselessly add to your sufferings, by deploring the loss of one who has ceased to remember you, or to be worthy of your solicitude: yet, alas! he is my brother; far from you, and regardless of what you suffer, an object dearer to his heart now occupies his thoughts; the claims of a wife are forgotten in the alluring charms of his

mistress; too long I fear hath your credulity been imposed on by his specious arts."

"Forgive me; in thus reprobating your husband, I am condemning my brother, but the voice of truth must not be silenced by a blind indulgence to his vices."

He turned, he saw the Marchesa, pale and apparently senseless, sink upon the sopha, and ringing for her attendants; he returned to the Count, to whom he mentioned the particulars of his interview; "but we must remove her and her infant from hence," said he, "I must convey her to one of my own seats, and there secure her before her husband can return."

Long was it, however, ere the Marchesa was able to remove from the apartment into which she was carried, after the conversation relative to her husband; the traces of death were stamped on her emaciated countenance,

as leaning on the arm of her woman, and accompanied by her infant, she feebly walked out to take the air.

"I will remove from hence," said she to the Marquis in their next interview, "I will no longer remain in this place, where every object reminds me of my sorrows, and mocks the present misery by recalling past joy."

"For the sake of my son, it is my duty to struggle with the hardships of my situation; he shall return with his wretched mother to her native simple mountains, where the knowledge of her injuries, or the vices of his father, will never penetrate; there, nursed in the bosom of solitude, a stranger to the corruptions of the world, he may be happy, for he may be virtuous; would that I had never strayed beyond their limits, and lost sight of the tranquillity which I there enjoyed."

These were not the sentiments which the Marquis wished her to indulge:

anxious that she should feel resentment for her supposed wrongs, he had hoped that it would have produced very different effects; he had not sufficiently investigated her character, or he would have known that these reflections were the most natural, under such circumstances, to the mind of a virtuous woman.

"But why think of returning to Switzerland, my dear sister? At the castle of Archelino, where you have never yet resided, no painful recollections could be awakened; you are yet too ill to think of so long a journey as that you propose; at the castle you might rest with your attendants, and there I would with pleasure accompany you, and if you found your health sufficiently re-established, you might then pursue your first intentions." Any change of place which seemed to offer a glance of tranquillity, was comfortable to her; she assented, and after a me-

lancholy journey of some days, they arrived at the castle.

The sun of each day arose and finished its course without throwing one cheering ray on the gloomy existence of the Marchesa: her child, the only treasure she possessed, by recalling the image of her alienated lord, only served to increase her affliction.

There was something in the behaviour of her brother which at intervals displeased, and rendered her yet more unhappy; a warmth in his manner which she had never noticed till their residence at the castle; her own almost unconsciously changed, she thought her situation too sacred to be treated with the slightest degree of freedom, and she conducted herself with unusual reserve.

Her health declined fast, and she looked forward to the period when her child would have no parent; "yet, surely," she would exclaim, in the moments of sad meditation, "surely his

father will extend to him that affection which hath been withdrawn from his unhappy mother, when hushed shall be each sorrow in the silent grave; the recollection of her injuries may strike on his heart, and he may atone for the misery he has caused to her, by fondly cherishing his infant son; with that hope she will forgive him all her wrongs, and her last prayer shall breathe forth supplications for him."

One morning finding herself unusually languid, she had retired to the dressing-room, where she sometimes sat, when the Conte Valdesa, attended by Chiaramonti, was introduced; she had not seen the former of some time, and she arose at his entrance; she made no effort however, to continue the conversation, and after the first salutation was over, seated herself in silence. After she had retired, the Conte observed her emaciated looks, and the little probabi-

lity there appeared to be of her recovery.

"Your scheme," said he, to the Marchese, "does not afford you much probability of success; it was a foolish business, and I fear you will be blown before you bring it to completion. The Marchese, her husband, will in all likelihood soon return, and the whole plot will of course be unravelled."

"Do you suppose then," interrupted Chiaramonti, "that I am so weak as not to have eluded his vigilance; before his return she will be far from hence, and secured to me for life."

Of the Marchese's return however he was not fully informed; a few days after he returned to the neighbourhood of Venice, to learn whether any tidings had been received of him; and what was his consternation on being informed, that he had already arrived; he had not however returned to his abode, but was then in Venice, where he had been

confined by illness. Apprised of this circumstance, he immediately dispatched a courier to the Conte, requesting that he would by some stratagem get the Marchese conveyed from the castle, and then prepared for the interview with his brother.

On arriving at the hotel, he was informed that the Marchese was much indisposed, but requested that any person who called on him, might be admitted; he was therefore shewn into an apartment, adjoining to the one where he was now reposing; as he heard his languid voice, in speaking to the servant, something like remorse struck on his heart, but he banished that weak sensation from his heroic bosom, which he considered as the accompaniment only of common minds.

The servant appeared to announce him, and acquainted him that his master was now ready to receive him; as he entered and saw the languid figure of his

brother reclining on a couch, from which he made a feeble effort to raise himself, and then sunk back, he was for a moment appalled at the recollection of his crimes, and conscience whispered, "villain" to his heart.

The Marchese affectionately pressed his hand: "You see," said he, "to what a state of weakness your brother is reduced; a fever which seized me many months ago, has enfeebled me to childish imbecility, but I was so anxious to behold again those objects so dear to me, after an absence of fifteen months, that I believe I run an imprudent risk in travelling so soon after the fever had subsided; but I dare hardly ask those questions so material to my happiness, for fears have sometimes hung heavily on my heart, and thick coming fancies have crowded on my imagination.

"Tell me of my beloved Marchesa, I have been rendered very unhappy by her long silence, though many months

insensible to my misery, from the friendly fever that visited me, friendly I call it, since it robbed me of the power of thinking."

"But why are you silent? for God's sake speak to me, tell me of my wife!" Chiaramonti was indeed silent, for he hesitated whether he should complete the misery of the Marchese, and give the finishing stroke to his own villainy; he raised his head, he met the eye of his brother; unable to bear its glance, his own was cast down. "Can you then," added he, "arm your mind with fortitude sufficient to bear the history which it must be my sad duty to unfold?"

"The Marchesa,"—he paused, struck with the enormity of his crime, the word trembled on his lips, "is then no more," interrupted the Marchese, in an agony of grief, "and my wretchedness is complete." Chiaramonti arose, he hesitated, then seated himself on the couch by the side of the Marchese. "Ah, why,"

said he, " my Lousia, did I ever leave you, or why have I lived to experience misery like this?" and grasping the hand of his brother, " Oh, tell me," said he, " the sequel of my miseries? say how and in what manner did my angel perish."

Chiaramonti was still silent: at length, " 'tis a subject," said he, " on which I would have spared your feelings. I have already revealed to you as much of my sad story, as you are now enabled to endure; you say your misery is complete, you cannot bear any addition to your present calamities; imagine then for a moment that the Marchesa was unworthy, that during your separation she had forfeited her claim to your affection; would this add poignancy to your feelings whilst mourning her loss?" The Marchese heaved a deep sigh, but sat motionless, and apparently insensible; after some moments he raised his head, and starting wildly from his seat, he

rushed out of the apartments. Chiaramonti alarmed his servant, who followed him, and found that one of the paroxysms, from which he had suffered so much during his long indisposition, had returned.

A physician was immediately sent for, who ordered that he should be kept perfectly quiet, and that no one should be allowed to enter his apartment, except those whose services could not be dispensed with; he continued raving at intervals the whole night, and frequently calling upon his wife, and praying of the attendants that she might be restored to him.

The heart of Chiaramonti was not quite callous, it was still in some degree awake to compunction, and there were moments, when listening to the groans of the wretched Marchese, he was softened into remorse.

On the second morning after this fatal interview, which had given the

last shock to the already enfeebled reason of his brother, the courier arrived with dispatches from the castle of Archelino, from which he learned that the Marchesa was indeed no more; she had been attacked by convulsions on the evening of that day in which Chiaramonti quitted the castle, which had in a few hours terminated her life; thus foiled in his schemes, a victim to his own baseness, fallen by the villainy of his own artifices, did this wretched man execrate the moment which gave him being.

The poor Marchesa was now delivered from his snares, though she died a sacrifice to his perfidy; heart-broken by the supposed desertion of her husband, she gradually pined away, and at length sunk into the grave.

The state of the Marchese was lingering, and it was the opinion of his physician, that a total derangement of intellect must succeed to the delirium

of fever; their opinion was too fully justified; from his bodily weakness he was recovered, but the seat of reason was shook, and his senses had fled to return no more.

In the chateau, Chiaramonti, where they conveyed him, did he wander alone for hours; sometimes in his lucid intervals a confused recollection of the past would dart on his disordered mind, and he would demand why the Marchesa had been torn from him, then bursting into tears, he would again relapse into all the gloom of settled despair.

Thus for years was the existence of a man, who was an ornament and honour to the society in which he had lived, rendered wretched by the uncontroulable passions of a fellow creature.

Ah, why hath man the will and power to make his fellow mourn? Had the impetuous passions of Chiaramonti yielded in the first instance to the controul of reason, the Marchesa had yet lived,

and the senses of her husband might have been preserved.

The Marchese remained in ignorance of the birth of his son, nor, had his mind been in a state to be sensible of the knowledge of that event, would he in all probability have been made privy to it.

The concealment of that circumstance was necessary to complete the scheme of Chiaramonti; for the Chevalier, as male heir, would have inherited the estates of his father; he was sent into Switzerland at a period when he was too young to be acquainted with his father's situation, or the villainy of his uncle, and he remained until the death of the Marchese, when Chiaramonti was quietly established in the possessions of his brother, and the Chevalier was persuaded to believe himself the object of his uncle's bounty.

Thirteen years had elapsed since the death of the Marchese, the father of the

Marchesa, was in too obscure a situation to have asserted the claims of his grandson; a minister of the protestant faith, in the canton of Zurich, his power was limited, and the distance at which he resided was such as to prevent his making himself fully acquainted with the requisite information.

The hand of death had now swept him away, and though the present Marchese was too powerful to have made this old man a formidable object, yet by his decease every obstacle seemed to be removed; he died in the belief that his daughter had fallen a sacrifice to the neglect of her husband, and from the hour of her dissolution, the name of the Marchese never escaped his lips, and only by accident had he become acquainted with his death.

The Chevalier had been sent into foreign service, from which, after an absence of five years, he had just returned; from all outward hostilities

then the Marchese was secure, for the Conte Valdesa, his partner in iniquity, was the only one to whose power he had committed himself, and yet this man was a stranger to peace.

Let none who commit injuries beyond the power of reparation, ever attempt to reason themselves into a belief that they can enjoy this feeling; he had destroyed the tranquillity of two beings, innocent and happy till he poisoned their felicity; the dagger with which he had murdered them had recoiled to his own bosom, and whilst living in the midst of affluence and splendour, he was suffering the torments of the damned.

CHAPTER LXXV.

My fault is past.—But oh, what form of pray'r
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder,
That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder.

SHAKESPEARE.

AFTER the death of Paulina, Emilie sat down to inform the Chevalier of the discovery which she had made, and waited in anxious expectation his reply.

One evening, on returning from her usual walk, she was informed that a courier had arrived with a letter for her, and was then in the convent; that they had been in search for her, since the

man had informed them that his business was of consequence, and that he was charged to use the utmost dispatch. Fears rushed on the mind of Emilie on this intelligence, and the first idea which presented itself, was that the Marchese had discovered her retreat; she hastened to the abbess, who presented her the letter.

She was relieved however, in some degree, when she discovered that the writing was the Chevalier's, she tore it open; it contained these few words.

I have only time to inform my Emilie that I am sent for to the chateau Chiaramonti, where the Marchese is dying; after writing a few lines to him in reply, she dismissed the courier, and then imparted to the abbess the intelligence she had received.

She sometimes dreaded that the Marchese had by some means become acquainted with the circumstance of the Chevalier's having assisted her in her

flight, and that this might only be a stratagem to get him into his power. Unwilling however to indulge suppositions which tended to her unhappiness, she endeavoured to reason herself into a belief that the circumstances were as they had been represented; many days passed on however, and her suspence was not alleviated by any further intelligence.

"If the Marchese," said she, "is really dying," as she sat ruminating on the information that she had received, "what in this hour must be his feelings, how must the injuries of his wretched wife rise in dreadful array before him, and the groans of his dying brother, who had rescued him in the season of danger, pursue his soul! O virtue, thou dearest best treasure, what are all the advantages of fortune, the splendour of rank, the homage of man, when placed in competition with the comforts which it is thine to bestow."

She still remained in this painful uncertainty, and her mind was racked by the different conjectures which presented themselves.

One night, as she was sat in the parlour of the abbess, a loud ringing at the gate arrested her attention, and before she could leave the room to make any enquiry respecting it, the well known voice of the Chevalier, sounding through the passage, filled her with mingled sensations of surprise and joy; in a moment he was with her, and his sable dress announced to her the death of the Marchese; he appeared overjoyed at this meeting.

"I have many things to say to you, my Emilie," said he, "and I must see you alone." She conducted him to her own parlour, and when the agitation caused by their meeting once more, after an absence of nearly ten months, had subsided, he entered upon the sub-

ject which so peculiarly interested them both.

" After I had written to you," he said, " those few lines, which were all that the short space allotted me would afford, I travelled with the utmost speed until I reached the chateau Chiaramonti, where I found the information I had received, respecting the Marchese, was perfectly true.

" I waited below a few moments, and was then requested to walk up into his apartment. He was stretched on the bed, his countenance distorted with bodily pain, his frame convulsed, and his senses apparently deranged ; when I approached the bed he did not at first appear to be sensible of my presence, though his servant informed me that he had several times enquired eagerly for me, and had seemed impatient for my arrival.

" His disorder, I learned, had proceeded from a violent contusion on the

back of his head, which he had received in a fall from his horse; his fever was very high, and he did not appear to me to be in a state to survive many hours. After I had sat by him some moments, he raised his head on the pillow and enquired for me; I then spoke to him, and he rested for a few moments as if unable to proceed. He then called to his servant and requested him to bring a packet of papers, which he delivered in silence to me.

"He groaned as if in excessive anguish, and wildly gazing round the room, called on me to save him. In his incoherent ravings he frequently mentioned the name of my father, and the injuries which he had done him; that he had torn my mother from him. He rambled too about the castle of Archelino.

"Go there," said he, "and you will find your wretched mother; hush, I think I hear her voice; yes, she is call-

ing on her husband, but he sleeps in death." Here a convulsive laugh terminated this paroxysm, and he sunk again into insensibility. After being in this state some hours he started up, and grasping my hand, "When your mother was at the castle," said he, "you were a smiling infant, you were innocent of all her wrongs, of your father's injuries. Yes, I was his brother, but I loved his wife and tore her from him.—Ah! heard you not his voice demanding her at my hands."

In this manner did he continue to rave, some times calling on my father to forgive him, and then mentioning some one to whom he had been united. Until the evening of that day these paroxysms never for a moment ceased, and then, exhausted by his conflicts, he slept for several hours; at midnight his groans ceased, his existence was terminated, and he sunk into the arms of death.

"On examining the papers which he had given me, I found several letters addressed to my father from my mother during, it appears, a long absence, all of which were written previous to my birth, I find none after; in these she complains of my father's silence, and reproaches him for his unkindness.—After reading and reflecting on these, I discovered some from him, addressed to her, in which he expresses his astonishment on not hearing from her. It appeared evident to me that the Marchese had intercepted the letters of each, and that these were the injuries which haunted his mind, producing those emotions which I have described to you."

It now occurred to the mind of Emilie that the fragment which she had found in the castle was the production of the Chevalier's mother. "I find," said the Chevalier, before she could mention to him her suspicions, "that

the Marquis was only at that period a younger brother, and my father then the Marchese Chiaramonti, since he is frequently adverted to in their letters, and stiled the Signior."

Thus then was the circumstance which Emilie was at a loss to account for, in the story of sister Paulina, completely explained. She then mentioned to the Chevalier the probability of the fragment, which she had found, having been written by the Marchesa, and they compared it with some of the letters which he had preserved; they found that the hand of each exactly corresponded; and thus was the whole mystery at once unravelled. Emilie described to him the sufferings of Paulina. "Of what complicated miseries," said she, "has the Marchese been the occasion, would that he had lived to be sensible of, and to have atoned, in some degree at least, for the dreadful injuries that he had inflict-

ed." Whilst dwelling on the sorrows of sister Paulina, Emilie wept, and the Chevalier regarded her in silent admiration.

"And now, my Emilie," said he, "we have been long separated, those obstacles which formerly divided us no longer exist, the death of the Marchese, by entailing on me the whole of his property, has given me the fond hope of terminating my anxieties. I trust you will consent to crown my good fortune by bestowing on me that treasure which I have so long, so ardently coveted, and without which all other possessions can afford no happiness to me.

"By your generous and disinterested conduct, when poor and friendless, you bestowed on me your affection, you have shewn me that you esteemed me for myself alone; but I hope the acquisition of splendid estates, a sounding title, will not rob me of your love, else would they

indeed be valueless to me, and the possession truly burdensome."

Emilie assured him that it was not her wish to be longer separated from him.

"Yet there is one favour," said she, "which I must ask of you: I have a brother fondly loved, long severed from me, of whom you have frequently heard me speak; it would convey a pleasure to my heart, that he should witness my union with you; where he is at present I know not, but I conceive the most effectual method of gaining some intelligence respecting him would be by application to a friend of his, resident in Naples, to whom he used sometimes to address himself; he must have returned to that city since I left the neighbourhood of it, and in all human probability would visit the ville; either of poor old Agnes, or of his friend, I think you would be likely to acquire the wished for information."

To this proposal the Chevalier was obliged, though unwillingly, to assent, and promised that he would immediately set out for Naples. After his departure, for Emilie had reminded him of the lateness of the hour, and given him permission to visit her in the morning, she went to the parlour of the abbess, and communicated to her the purport of the Chevalier's visit.

" Believe me, my young friend," said she, " that I rejoice in your prosperity, and trust that you will experience much solid comfort, and many years of happiness.

" The delicacy of the Chevalier's attachment to you, in consenting to a separation until happier prospects awaited you, has given me a high idea of his heart and understanding; you have both been educated in the school of adversity; you will enjoy prosperity with moderation, never losing sight of the

possession of virtue, still reflecting that it is that only one which promises stability, and insures to us temporal and eternal felicity.

"I grieve to lose you; but to wish for your society at the expence of your happiness, would be selfish. I have not, though secluded from the world, dead to its enjoyments and its pains, forgotten the season or the feelings of youth.—No, I can enter into these, and my heart yet vibrates at the recollections which they produce; how many of those then loved and cherished, are now mingled with the dead, some severed from me by their own unworthiness, and others estranged by new connections, different pursuits, and altered views."

"Yet my heart," said Emilie, bursting into tears, "whilst it ceases to beat, must throb at the remembrance of my kind friend; the hours which I have spent with you can never be forgotten.

Your friendly council, your compassionate attentions, your benignant countenance, will live with me wherever I may be situated, or however I may be afflicted."

She rose to retire, since the evening was far spent.

The abbess pressed her hand.—"God bless you!" said she, "my dear child, and may you always be thus worthy of his care. I should be concerned to find that prosperity had corrupted the native sweetness of your disposition, or rendered you less sensible to the miseries of your fellow-creatures; happier, far happier are you in your present lot, were such a fatal change as that, ever to take place, yet I do not fear it, though its effects are powerful on the human mind, and it is infinitely more difficult to bear than adversity's darkest clouds. My daughter has a mind sufficiently strong to avoid its pernicious influence."

In the morning the Chevalier again visited the convent, and it was agreed that he should set out for Naples, and there endeavour to discover Valdesa's place of abode; he was then to return to the convent, where their union it was intended should take place.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

"We passed by, and lo, he was not; we marked him, but he could not be found."

As Jessica was one day busily employed in looking over some papers, Valdesa entered the room, and laying down the Morning Chronicle, "there," said he, "I have not yet read it, but it may possibly contain some amusement for you." Jessica took it up, and perusing it, amongst other articles of intelligence, the following met her eye.

"We state, from undoubted authority, that the gentleman (Mr. Greville)

against whom a noble lord lately commenced a prosecution, crim. con. has suddenly died on his road to Italy, where it was imagined he intended to have sheltered himself, the damages being laid at ten thousand pounds."

Jessica laid down the paper, and for a few moments did not resume it; and as she sat ruminating on that circumstance, and reflecting on the encreased number of these trials, so very disgraceful to the inviduals, and so shocking to humanity, the idea occurred that the Mr. Greville alluded to might possibly be her brother, and a cold damp struck on her heart at this terrible supposition, and Valdesa, perceiving the alteration in her looks, enquired if she had met with any intelligence that disturbed her; she pointed out the paragraph to him, and silently rising from her seat, walked to the window: when Valdesa had glanced his eyes over it, he instantly discovered the source of Jessica's un-

easiness, and endeavoured to calm her apprehensions; she felt so unhappy, notwithstanding his efforts to appease her mind, that he determined to go out and endeavour to gain some more particular information respecting the affair; as he was leaving the room for that purpose, Jessica called to him, and he returned to her.

"I have been thinking," said she, "my love, that an application to Mr. Gurney, on this subject, might give us some clue to the developement of it."

The old gentleman now came in, and they mentioned the circumstance to him; he offered to accompany Valdesa, and they set out.

When they arrived at Mr. Gurney's, they found, to their infinite disappointment, that he was not at home; and unwilling as Valdesa was to enter the house of Lady Stanhope, after the reception which his wife had there met, yet the anxiety she was labouring

under overcame his scruples, and he proposed to Mr. Hanbury to accompany him there, to attempt to gain some further information.

They proceeded to Bedford-square, and upon enquiring for Lady Stanhope, the servant informed them that she was at home, and they were shewn into the drawing-room, where she was seated: as the servant announced the Signor Valdesa and Mr. Hanbury, she slightly glanced her eye over each with an expression of supercilious haughtiness, but when the man returned to the room, and enquired of Mr. Hanbury whether his carriage was to wait, she relaxed a little, and assumed somewhat less majesty in her behaviour.

"I took the liberty of calling upon your ladyship," said Valdesa, "in order to make an enquiry of you, in which my wife, your niece, is much interested; are you acquainted with Mr. Greville's present place of abode?" "I was informed,"

said her ladyship, " that he was in London not long ago, but I really know nothing further of the matter; my niece did once call upon me since her arrival, but I have not since seen any thing of her."

" Yet you heard from her," said Mr. Hanbury, " when, destitute and afflicted, she addressed you from her prison; she then gave you the power of alleviating her miseries, and extending your protection to herself, and her poor innocent unoffending child; you denied yourself the happiness which results from the consciousness of relieving calamity, by the answer which you sent to her application, and all further importunity has been happily spared to you; she has met with one who will shield her in future from the scorn of the wealthy, and the contumely of the proud; were the Father of the Universe to act towards his wretched creatures with the same inhumanity which they practise towards

each other, how dreadful would be their lot? dreadful indeed, where they sought protection, to find the pain of desertion, aggravated by cruelty, insult and scorn."

This was a stroke which her ladyship had not anticipated, and she sat trembling with suppressed rage, internal shame, and mortified pride. "I do not know," said she, after a pause of a few minutes, "who has given you the privilege of insulting me in my own house, and it is the first time that I was ever upbraided with a want of either generosity or humanity; I have done too much already for poor relations, without I had met with a more grateful return; but indeed it was what I might have expected."

"I am sorry," said Mr. Hanbury, "that your ladyship has been surrounded by persons who found it their interest to deceive you, or that you have remained thus long a stranger to the voice

of truth, which *I* conceive to be a very serious misfortune; I am an old man, and soon to bid adieu to those scenes in which you may yet take a part; learn then, that the only way to be respected is by *deserving* to be so; those beings that flutter round you in the hour of health and prosperity, *flattering* your weaknesses, and *bearing* with your foibles, will, when the *dark* cloud of sickness or adversity hovers o'er your dwelling, forsake it, and leave you to your own reflections; seek then the afflicted, *feed* the poor, and cloathe the naked; *these* are the retrospect which the mind enjoys, when every earthly consolation fails."

He now turned to Valdesa, and proposed to take his leave.

"We will not," he continued, "trespass longer on your ladyship's time; I hope we shall yet be so fortunate as to gain the information which we called on you to procure," and walking very com-

posedly out of the room, he descended the stairs to his carriage.

He then consulted Valdesa on the propriety of calling a second time on Mr. Gurney, whom they hoped to find at home, and on driving to his house, they were admitted and shewn into a room, where he a few minutes after made his appearance.

Valdesa, after explaining to him who he was, disclosed the purport of his visit.

"The information which you have received is," he said, "I fear, but too true. I heard of the circumstance, and afterwards met with a friend of Mr. Greville's, who corroborated it, but I can refer you to him, he is now at Osborne's hotel, and his name is Davenport; should you meet with him, he will be enabled to give you the desired communication."

They then drove to the Adelphi, and, enquiring for Mr. Davenport, were shewn to his room, where, to the great surprise

of Valdesa, he beheld, in the friend of Charles Greville, the man whom he had wounded in the rencontre at Montpelier.

He immediately recognized Valdesa, and extending to him his hand, "I trust," said he, "that the past is forgotten by me; it is only remembered with sensations of regret; headstrong and impetuous, I had been little accustomed to reflect before I delivered those sentiments which might wound my auditors, and draw upon myself their contempt or resentment; many events since the period in which we last unfortunately met, have occurred to teach me the value of reflection, and the advantages which result from propriety of conduct; I trust I have profited by those, and now I solicit your pardon for the injuries which you received from me."

Valdesa betrayed a degree of emotion on this address, which did great honour

to his heart, and raised him in the estimation of Mr. Hanbury, whilst he received the hand that was offered to him, and paused for reply. Davenport continued, "I very sensibly feel the merit which attaches to this forgiveness, which, whilst it proves the generosity of your feelings, more deeply wounds mine.

"I recollect what your provocations were; that I execrated your country, and contemned its religious persuasion; these were sacred to you, and no apology can be offered for so cruel and illiberal an attack."

Valdesa now assured him that he had ceased to feel any resentment on the subject, and requested it might never more be renewed; "henceforth, I hope," he continued, "we meet as friends:" he then entered upon that topic which so much interested him, the account which he had read of Mr. Greville's death.

Davenport appeared much shocked

to find that Valdesa was so near a connexion of the deceased, and confirmed the intelligence of his death.

" It is now three weeks," said he, " since he sent for me; I had previously learned the event of the trial, and his leaving this country was a circumstance that I had anticipated: when I got to him, he informed me that the chaise was then ordered which was to convey him from hence; he appeared much agitated, and drank a larger quantity of wine than I thought prudent; I remonstrated with him, but he still continued to swallow glass after glass without seeming to be sensible of what he was doing."

" A niece of Lady Selwyn's, whom I hope soon to be united to, and with whom he had formerly been acquainted, he frequently spoke of during the course of the afternoon;" ' you will possess a treasure," he said, " in Sophia, but keep her from the society of her aunt, who

is not a proper companion for one whose principles are yet uncorrupted."

"The chaise had now arrived; I could not help feeling much on a separation from a man for whom, amidst all his follies, I had preserved some affection; at least, that kind of affection which persons feel who are constantly in each others society, and engaged in the same round, whether of dissipation or more sober pursuits; as he grasped my hand on bidding farewell, I observed to him its burning heat, and requested that he would not drink any more wine that evening; he promised that he would not.

"'Tis now a week since I received a letter from the master of an inn about thirty miles from hence, saying a Mr. Greville, who was at his house, extremely ill, requested he would write to me. I immediately ordered my carriage, and went down to him; I had arrived

however too late to be of any service, all was over, but I continued there 'till I had paid a proper respect to his memory, and then hastened back to town."

Valdesa now enquired into the nature of his disorder, and found that it had proceeded from intemperance in his mode of living, and that no medical exertions could have saved him. Upon rising to take leave, Mr. Hanbury invited Davenport to his lodgings. "I can there," said he, "introduce you to the sister of the young man, whose unhappy fate you have been describing; you will see in her the effects of a proper education, and the comfort which flows from the retrospect of a life well spent: poor misguided youth, how much happier would it have proved if he had imbibed those sentiments, by which she has been enabled to bless and be blessed."

Valdesa felt a secret gratification in

this little tribute to the merits of Jessica, and they returned home.

Jessica had been anxiously awaiting the arrival of Mr. Hanbury and her husband, and had, during their absence, suffered much inquietude of mind; they had now the melancholy office of imparting to her the death of her brother, and by degrees prepared her for the shock, which they well knew she would experience.

She bore it, however, with much firmness, though the tear bursting from her eye at intervals betrayed the anguish of her heart.

"Is this then," said she, "the end of my poor father's hopes, and of a sister's prayers? Alas! how visionary have the one proved,—how little have the other been regarded?" She rose, and retiring to her own room, meditated on the termination of her brother's mad career; yet she did not know that he had a wife whom he had deserted, or

the injuries which she had sustained.

The following day, however, Davenport called and mentioned to Valdesa the circumstance of Charles Greville's marriage, and of Mrs. Greville's place of abode.

Jessica immediately wrote to her a very kind letter, informing her of their intention of going over to Montpelier, and inviting her, on their return to England, to come over to them. Jessica had previously written to Madamoiselle, mentioning their wish of being reunited to her friends, and their projected voyage. Valdesa saw that, amidst all the efforts, in which he was joined by Mr. Hanbury, to amuse and console her, she was suffering deeply; she had been visited by so many trials of her fortitude, that her spirits were indeed sometimes sadly drooping, as she sat and reflected on the various calamities that had befallen her; her child im-

proved in loveliness, and was much a favourite with her host, and Valdesa never appeared so happy as when employed in those grateful and endearing duties of a husband and a father.

CHAPTER LXXI.

Ce'n est assez arrêtons nous ici : ce que j'ai connu de la vie de ses inconstances, de ses esperances trompees de ses fugitives et chimeriques fèlicitès me fervit craindre, si j'agoutois une seule page acette histoire doitre obligée d'y placer un malheur.

ELISABETH.

It is sufficient, let us pause here. From what I have experienced of the vicissitudes of life, its delusive hopes, its fleeting and visionary happiness, I am afraid that if I add one page to my story I must there place a calamity.

MR. Hanbury expressed a wish that Jessica would prepare for the intended voyage; Matilda and her husband spent one day with the party, and the following they commenced their preparations;

a few days saw those completed, their voyage was short, and Jessica had soon the satisfaction of embracing once more her worthy friends at Montpelier, and introducing to them Mr. Hanbury and her husband. When the party reached Montpelier, Jessica instantly went to make enquiries after them, and found that they were at their country house, where, accompanied by Valdesa, she rode over, Mr. Hanbury having declined being of the party; they forgot not however the worthy old Philip; he had shared with his mistress the sorrow of their parting, and she determined that he should not be excluded the pleasure of their re-union; when Madamoiselle heard the voice of Jessica, as she descended from the carriage, she ran out and was in a moment in her arms, and, wholly unrestrained by the Signor's presence, poured forth her joy on this happy meeting.

"Ah, my dear Signora," said she,

" how happy you have made us all, I love you better for this proof of your friendship than ever, but where are my dear little Hanbury and old Philip?"

Jessica now introduced the Signor, and Madamoiselle gracefully courtesied to him, and welcomed him to their house.

Old Philip, who had rode after the carriage, now made his appearance, and she ran to him shaking him heartily by the hand, " Here is your old partner," said she, " as much disposed to lead off another ball with you as ever; but why have you not brought my sweet little Hanbury?"

" Why madam," said Philip, " we were all so glad to see your face again, and your good father and brother's, that we all wished to come, all but indeed young master, who could not have a say in the matter by reason that he can't talk, but my mistress thought it would

be better to leave him behind us till the next time we came."

"You surely," said she, turning to Jessica, "have not been so barbarous as to leave him in England, for if that is the case I shall I think take a voyage to bring the dear little fellow here."

Jessica now calmed her by assuring her, that he was only at Montpelier, and she then led them to the house, "I wish," said she, "that my father and sister had arrived, they are just gone to meet Louis;" "your sister," reiterated Jessica, "what sister? why this is a secret you never let me into." "Now," said she, "I leave you to guess whether it is Louis, or your humble servant, who has introduced a new connection into the family since we had the pleasure of last seeing you."

"And," turning to the Signor, "does not your wife pay me a miserable compliment in thus hesitating for a re-

ply? Now, being so well acquainted with both parties, and, recollecting poor Louis, which is the most probable to have met with any one so foolish as to embark in the uncertain voyage of matrimony?"

"Perhaps," said Valdesa, "Jessica is hesitating, from not knowing or picturing to herself any one worthy of you."

"Come, come then," said she, "in return for that compliment I will keep you in suspence no longer, 'tis poor Louis, who has had the temerity to take unto himself a mate. To tell you the truth, said she, I believe he was so miserable after the Signora's departure, she had left such a terrible void in all our hearts, that poor Louis, not having many resources within himself to dissipate his chagrin, sought out for a wife, and a pretty little harmless inoffensive being she is;" but, looking from the window, "here are the party."

They were immediately in the room,

and Monsieur Delaborde folded Jessica in his arms, whilst Delaborde respectfully saluting her, presented his wife; they then turned to the Signor, and expressed their gratitude for the honour which he had conferred upon them in this voyage, and in thus restoring to them the society of the Signora, which they so highly valued, and Monsieur Delaborde, taking his daughter-in-law by the hand, led her to Jessica, and requested that she would honour her with her friendship.

"You now behold," said he, "addressing himself to Madame Delaborde, one who in prosperity and adversity as a wife, a mother, and a friend, has fulfilled those important relations, and endeared herself to all who have had the happiness of knowing her."

Jessica felt much on this address, and Valdesa turned to the window to conceal his emotion.

They passed the day with their

friends, and in the evening parted from them with extreme reluctance, but when Jessica explained to them that they had left Mr. Hanbury at Montpelier, they ceased to urge them to take up their abode amongst them.

Louis insisted on accompanying them in their ride, and on their expressing to him their admiration of his wife, they found that she was the daughter of a merchant in the neighbourhood who had been very unfortunate, and that Delaborde had been long attached to her.

"My father," said he, "with that generosity of sentiment which has always so much distinguished him, only enquired if my wife was amiable, and having received such an account as was perfectly satisfactory, urged our immediate union; and Adellé, of whose disinterested and amiable disposition you have seen so many proofs, received her with the most flattering marks of kindness and attention."

Jessica now mentioned to Delaborde her suspicions, that having sailed in the same vessel with the gentleman who had formerly paid his addresses to Madamoiselle, and related the scene which had passed.

"It is very probable," said Delaborde, "that he may have been the same, since he has friends in England whom he might be going to visit."

"And does your sister still persevere in her resolution of leading a single life?" asked Jessica.

"I believe," replied he, "that it is one which she will never change."

Valdesa now expressed his regret at this circumstance. "So delightful a companion," said he, "as Madamoiselle Delaborde appears, with so much vivacity, and so much goodness, I lament that those should not be diffused to some individual who might merit such a distinction.

They had by this time reached

their lodgings, where they found Mr. Hanbury awaiting their arrival; they introduced Delaborde to him, and he yielded to his solicitation, that he would allow his father the honour of seeing him at their house the next day. Monsieur, Madame, and Madamoiselle Delaborde, called upon them. That and several succeeding weeks, they spent in the society of their friends, in whose affections Valdesa now almost rivalled his wife.

As the party were walking one day in the environs of Montpelier, a female figure at some distance attracted their attention by the gracefulness of her form. She was leaning on the arm of a gentleman, and as they were stopping to contemplate some object, Madamoiselle remarked to Valdesa, that she thought she had seldom if ever seen a more elegant pair.

"They are from my country I perceive," said he, "from the fashion of

the lady's habit, though the gentleman, I observe, wears a Swiss uniform." They had now approached nearer to the place where they were standing, and they heard the lady make some observation to her companion in Italian, which confirmed Valdesa's idea. "I wonder," said he, to Jessica, "who they are, for they are evidently strangers in this place?"

The lady spoke again, "Surely," said he, "that is a voice familiar to my ear," he paused to listen, the lady ceased to speak, she turned round and uttering a cry of joy, "It is him," said she, "my Valdesa, my long lost brother;" and throwing herself into his arms, rested her head on his shoulder whilst tears poured down her face, and her frame was much agitated.

The party gazed at her, and then regarded each other with silent astonishment; to Valdesa however, the mystery was unravelled, and he folded in his arms that sister whom in imagina-

tion, he had consigned to the dark and silent tomb.

"My Emilie," said he, "is it possible! where have you thus long been? Surely my senses cannot deceive me; do I not fold in my embrace that sister so dear to my heart."

Emilie had by this time recovered some composure. "Yes, that sister," said she, "who parted from you under sad circumstances, melancholy forebodings, which have since been too fatally confirmed, and who now, led by the hand of a kind indulgent husband, seeks her brother here."

Valdesa was long ere he could recover from the delirium of surprize and joy, which this event had occasioned.

They returned, however, to Mr. Hanbury's lodgings, where Emilie related to Valdesa all that had befallen her since their separation. "After our marriage," said she, for the Marquis

had been unsuccessful in his researches after you, "we repaired with all possible expedition to Naples, where we fortunately met with a person who had some time transacted business for you. He informed us that the last time he had heard of you, you were resident at Montpelier, and hither we determined immediately to direct our course."

Valdesa now presented his sister to Jessica, who embraced her with the truest cordial esteem, and congratulated them on their re-union; with the frank, unassuming, and generous manners of the young Marquis they were all much pleased.

Emilie did not in her narration fail to comment on the benevolent services of the friendly abbess, and her regret on parting with her.

The conduct of the secretary, to whom she had been indebted for that important warning, which she had received in the avenue leading to the chateau,

she next adverted to. His services had not, however, been unrewarded, since the present Marquis had settled upon him a pension for life; the party heard with sensations of admiration and surprize of the steady fortitude and sufferings of Emilie.

On the Chevalier, however, the task of communicating to Valdesa the death of his father devolved.

The Conte had died in consequence of poison, and it was strongly rumoured in Naples, that the woman whom he had married was instigatory to his death; his estates were not however intailed, and the possessions of those she had secured to herself and her children.

To Valdesa, however, the latter circumstance was not of moment; independent of Mr. Hanbury's West India possessions, which he had lost, he possessed an ample fortune that he had already bequeathed to the Signor and

Jessica, and on their death, so willed it, as to devolve to their children.

After a residence of some weeks at Montpelier, Mr. Hanbury, Valdesa, and Jessica, with the Marquis and the Marchioness, determined upon going over to England, and as Madamoiselle Delaborde had never been in that country, they prevailed on Monsieur Delaborde to allow of her accompanying them, and the evening arrived in which this happy party were assembled at Monsieur Delaborde's to pay their farewell visit, where we now take our leave of them.

In Monsieur Delaborde we behold a striking proof of the effects that result from a strict regard to honour and integrity; he lived generally beloved and universally respected, and his old age was crowned with the happy prospect of a life usefully and honourably devoted to the service of his family, the welfare of society. The Marchese Chia-

ramonti and the Conte Valdesa present a dreadful contrast, though not a less striking lesson. In those men we see the fatal influence of ungoverned, ill-restrained passion, on the human mind.

The abbess of the convent presents to us a proof, that in solitude as well as in the busy scenes of the world, the mind, if directed to wise purposes and benevolent pursuits, may dispense and partake of happiness.

The Marquis and his lovely bride, trained in the school of adversity, their passions regulated by reason, as the abbess predicted, bore prosperity with moderation.

Mr. Hanbury repentant of his errors, and viewing the littleness of those possessions for which he had sacrificed justice and truth, embraced every method of making restitution for the injuries he had caused, and lived in the daily performance of charitable actions

towards his unfortunate fellow-creatures.

The humble Philip affords a happy instance, that those qualities which render us beloved and respected may adorn that man placed in the most obscure situation, and where the refinements of education can never have been imparted; his faithful services and affectionate heart, were amply repaid and gratified by the munificence of his master, who placed him in a situation where he could pass in quiet the remainder of his life.

In Charles Greville is exhibited the melancholy consequences of dissipation, the fatal effects that arise from a contempt of those sacred truths, the gospel tenets of religion, the ablest guide and best support of man.

Valdesa, his mind softened, his passions subdued by the society of his wife, and reflection on the past, yielded no more to prejudices which had disturbed his peace, but, candid to others, just to

himself, beheld his rising offspring, and directed their steps with feeling, truth, and affection.

Jessica, happy in contemplating her children, and training them in the paths of rectitude, enjoyed that serenity which can *only* exist in the minds of the virtuous.

The precepts of her departed friend, to which she had religiously adhered in *prosperity* and *adversity*, were still present to her mind, and her life exhibited a shining example of *fortitude*, *benevolence*, and *truth*.

FINIS.

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